# REALSIMPLE

LIFE MADE EASIER

**SLEEP** BETTER, **WAKE REFRESHED** 

# Minimize & Organize



Dozens of Ideas from People Who Downsize, Do Less, and Live More Cozy Outdoor **Get-Togethers** 









# PROP STYLING BY CARLA GONZALEZ-HART

# FEBRUARY



"With a few flowers in my garden, half a dozen pictures, and some books, I live without envy."

-LOPE DE VEGA

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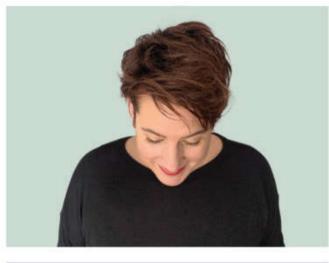


All It Takes Is A Shake™



#### EDITOR'S NOTE

# A Magazine Is Like a Linen Closet













ing up the linen closet? Everything on those shelves belonged there, and it pleased you to open the door and behold the tidiness. Now a few years have passed. Maybe you haven't used the magenta towels since you painted the bathroom. The sheets you got for Christmas had to go two shelves away from the other sheets, and wouldn't it be nice to arrange them in wicker bins? Plus, what to make of the precariously tilting tower of random wash-cloths? Where did they all come from?

Things aren't out of hand, but you *notice*. That's who you are.

In this way, magazines are like closets.

At *Real Simple*, Saturday Closet Day was Zoom Summertime. We looked at all the pages and the structure—and were delighted to discover anew that we liked things a whole lot just the way they were.

But we did decide to make five sections four (can you even guess which one is missing?), to add some new columns (like Power of Less), and to change the names of other columns so they're more clearly described (looking at you, Kitchen Hero and Genius Beauty). Our biggest move was to introduce a new font: Type enthusiasts, please meet our serif, Canela, in the headline above! We hope you'll find each other smart, classic, and elevated—but never, ever stuffy.

When Real Simple arrives in your mailbox, if it pleases you at first sight-first flip-through-that's the work of the art team shown here. Muzam Agha, Deanna Lowe, L.J. Whritenour, and Lina LeGare (clockwise from top right) work under the direction of Emily Kehe (top left), someone so good at so many things she even gets her own column. We Found It reveals a single life-easing product, new or old, that someone on our team absolutely adores. You can see Emily's pick for the best bag for hands-free living on page 32. Trust me when I say Emily stuffed, wore, and assessed many bags around her home and neighborhood before settling on the right one. I was on pins and needles. When she finally revealed her favorite, I bought it immediately and now take it off only to shower and sleep.

As anyone who's ever tried to maintain a closet, pantry, or garage knows, it requires vision, restraint, and a few Saturdays of hard work to keep things simple. I hope you like what we've done with the place.

XO S.



LET'S CONNECT!
Follow me on Instagram at @LizVaccariello.





# REALSIMPLE

What do you wear that makes you feel most like yourself?

"OPI Lincoln Park After Dark nail polish."

"A rainbow-stripe knit winter hat.

I've had it for 20

years and live in fear

of losing it."

"An apron."

Liz Vaccariello EDITOR IN CHIEF

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"I collect Long Beach

Island sweatshirts.

They make me feel cozy

and remind me of

family vacations."

"My denim overalls from high school."



"Jeans and a flannel shirt."

"The simple silver

necklace my mom

gave me when I

was in sixth grade

that spells my name

in Hebrew letters."

# Real Simple Everywhere Find exclusive ideas, tips, and ways to make life easier—every day.



SCENES

Nikki Boyd

PROFESSIONAL

ORGANIZER

@athomewithnikki

#### Go-to winter recipe:

Freshly baked banana nut bread paired with a cup of coffee.

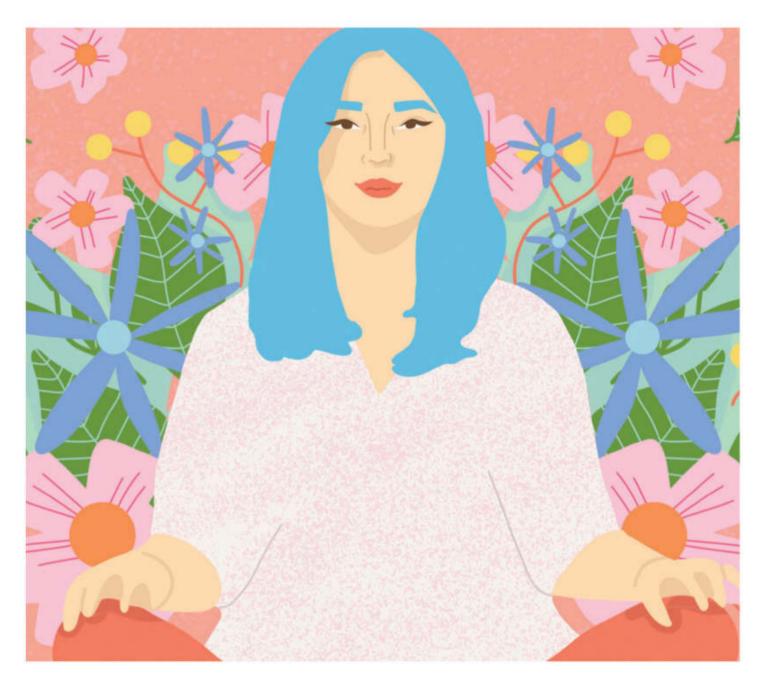
#### Most-used gadget:

My espresso machine, for sure. That gadget works overtime in my house.

## Coziest item in your home:

My day officially comes to an end once I sit down in my media room recliner.

See how Nikki organizes her own kitchen on page 82.



#### ON THE WEB

#### **Mindfulness for Skeptics**

How in the world can a deep inhale affect your health?
We unpack the science—and spotlight the true benefits—
of the buzziest wellness practices in our special
mindfulness digital issue at realsimple.com/mindfulness.



#### IN YOUR WALLET

## We Found It, and You Save

Real Simple readers
can get 20 percent off
the State Lorimer
Fanny Pack on page 32
by scanning the QR
code below. Just hold
your phone's camera
over the code. Offer valid
1/22/21 to 2/5/21.



#### ON INSTAGRAM

# Loving That Free-Air Life

This winter, everyone is embracing friluftsliv.
The Norwegian term is all about enjoying fresh air and nature, even when the weather forecast predicts not-so-sunny skies.



#### IN THE KITCHEN

#### **Wildly Delicious**

"This gingery beetand-grain bowl is my favorite shot from this month's food feature, on page 86. I grew up eating a similar dish at my grandmother's table," says food editor Ananda Eidelstein. For more plant-based meals, head to realsimple.com/ vegetarian.

#### YOUR WORDS

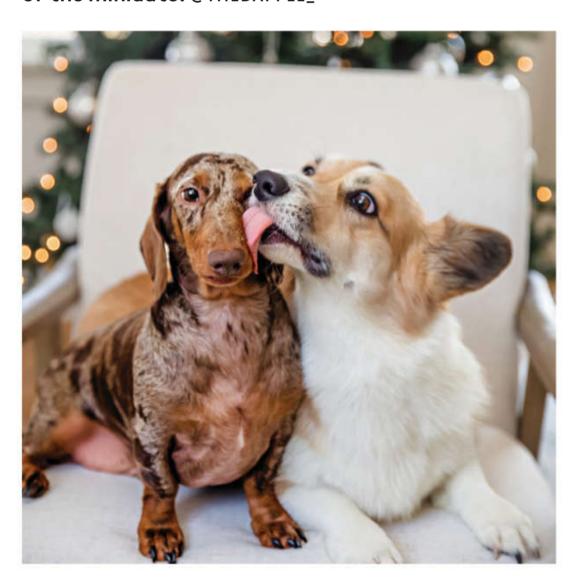
# What Do You Admire About Your Parents' Relationship?

My parents
never ran out
of conversation.
My dad could
make my mom
laugh so hard.

@ @KIMBERLYCHRISTENSEN378

#### #RSLOVE

Even if it's just a silly thing, like taking out the trash together every Monday night, they always carve out time to connect. My parents have been married for 36 years because they're masters of the minidate. @THEDAPPLE\_



For sharing this photo with us, @thedapple\_ will receive our new special edition, The Power of Less. If you want your picture to be considered, tag photos on Instagram with #rslove.

# They showed that traditional gender roles are a choice.

My mom took out the garbage when it needed to be taken out, and my dad drove during class field trips, when it was my turn for a parent to volunteer. I didn't realize it until I was older, but the lesson was invaluable.

@JJGREENE11

# They seemed to be having so much fun.

CINDY ROLLINS, LAKEVILLE, MINNESOTA

to watch them.

© @ERSKIN26

Oh, they could

would clear a space

dance! Folks

# Sometimes it takes a divorce to find your person.

I have two moms and two dads who are absolutely, positively meant for each other. The universe used a stepping stone to create us three girls, sisters with two different mothers.

**O** @MOREL5700

They have been married 36 years and still call each other every day at lunch.

TANYA SPIVEY, ST. LOUIS

They complemented (and complimented) each other, thereby producing four successful, productive, and kind children.

JUDITH WATRY-DLUGONSKI, TULARE, CALIFORNIA

#### They were good and gentle people who taught school, played Scrabble,

played Scrabble, tended their gardens, and reared one child. I was the lucky one.

@SHEILAMURT

My parents
celebrated their
55th anniversary
last year. What I
admire most is their
unconditional love
for each other.
They embrace each
other's strengths
and overlook weaknesses. Theirs is not
a smothering love
but a supportive,
empowering love.
LIESL HUHN,

## They haven't killed each other.

@KENDA\_LOU

JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE They were like penguins—they mated for life.
My father gave my husband some advice when we married: "Always continue to date your wife."
REBECCA PEERY,

CERES, VIRGINIA

My parents have been educators their entire careers, and they have always, always been a team.

They keep the romance alive, parented their four daughters as a united front, and now help their grandchildren with complicated math problems and college application essays.

HEATHER BRAUN-BAKKEN, PLAINSBORO, NEW JERSEY My mom and dad are 82 and 87, and I love that I can still find them kissing in the kitchen!

VALERIE HOFFMANN,

MONTAUK, NEW YORK

They would have straight-up martinis in Waterford glasses to celebrate a bonus, a promotion, or other great news. When we saw those glasses come out, we knew something good was going to be announced.

JANE BERMANN McGRATH.

My dad asked us kids every night if we knew that he loved our mom. Every. Single. Night. JENNA AYRE, DRAPER, UTAH

LISLE, ILLINOIS



#### READER OF THE MONTH

# Meredith Wellmeier, 39 WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

## What do you admire about your parents' relationship?

They've been married 51 years and partly owe it to keeping separate checking accounts. It's important for both people to maintain independence and control over their spending.

#### **Favorite room:**

I spend most of my time in the sunroom because it overlooks my husband's garden.

## Most organized part of your life:

I'm going through a phase where everything in the pantry is in a neat little container.

#### Least organized part:

I'm terrible at keeping up with my daughter's first-grade assignments. I don't recall having so much schoolwork when I was a kid.

#### What's always in your car?

I keep a baseball in my glove compartment. Years ago, I was in standstill traffic by a baseball stadium. The ball flew out of the stadium and landed by my car's tire. It seemed lucky, so it's been with me ever since.

#### **NEXT QUESTION**

#### What moment in your life do you wish had been photographed?

Send an email to **yourwords@realsimple.com** and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.





#### MY SIMPLE REALIZATION

# "Help—In Its Many Forms— Can Yield Bountiful Fruits"

for two babies and cook meals from scratch.

Then a new friend showed up with a tray of pasta.

NOT TOO LONG AGO, my husband, then 2-year-old, and I were separated from our orderly life by a string of fitful events: a job loss, a book deal, and an unplanned pregnancy. The book deal I'd waited almost two years to secure seemingly arrived at the exact moment the pregnancy test strip turned pink. My Jamaican, physics PhD husband had just lost his well-paying tech job—and his skilled-workers visa along with it. I'll never forget waddling my massively pregnant way into U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and explaining to a kind government official that our marriage was as real—and raw—as they come.

Months later, a series of significant deliveries were made, a healthy baby girl topping the list. A green card. Blessedly, another job offer for my husband. And I delivered my cookbook to my publisher. We finally exhaled.

Less than a week after my
C-section, I wanted to cook again.
I missed the food, yes, but also
the process: the calypso music
I'd play in the kitchen, the aromas
that hugged our home. I convinced
myself it would be best for everyone if I cooked. But reality has a
way of asserting itself.

My recovery was painful. A newish mom friend, Jessica, offered to bring me a meal. Typically, I'd politely decline such a gesture from a friend I only loosely knew, but my depletion was too real. She arrived a couple of hours later with flowers, precut fruit, and a tray of Costco ravioli lasagna that seemed to weigh more than our newborn. I looked at it with doubt in my eyes, thinking, "What is this unknown combination of cheese?" But as soon as that judgy thought took hold, both the baby and the toddler started to fuss. Mystery cheese and tomato sauce it would be.

I slid the tray into the oven, and as it came to temp, I felt the emotional salve that comes from accepting help. A meal doesn't need to be handmade to make me feel whole. In that moment, I learned to be gentle with myself and embrace the "good enough," because I was the only one wagging a finger at me.

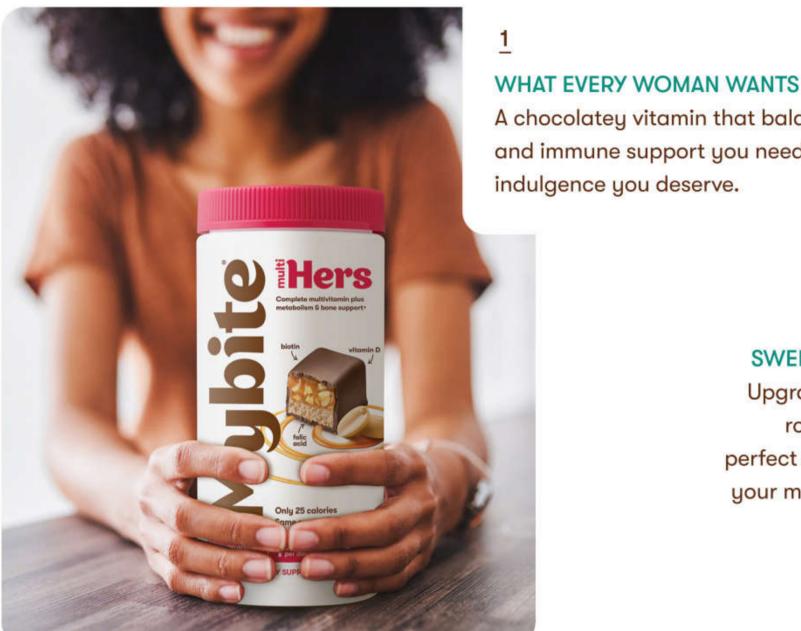
From that tray of pasta, a core value emerged: Help—in its many forms—when genuinely offered and honestly accepted, can yield exceptionally bountiful fruits.

Nowadays I buy at least one
Costco prepared-food item and gift it to our elderly neighbor, who lives alone. It's a continuum I'm honored to embrace. And Jessica has become one of my most treasured friends.

BRIGID RANSOME WASHINGTON IS THE AUTHOR OF COCONUT. GINGER. SHRIMP. RUM.

# Your cold season essentials

Supporting your immune system can also be delicious. Mybite's patented technology combines the benefits of vitamins with rich caramel, roasted peanuts and a fluffy center all in a guilt-free chocolatey bite. Yum!



A chocolatey vitamin that balances the nutrition and immune support you need with the sweet indulgence you deserve.

#### SWEET SELF-CARE Upgrade your daily

2

routine with the perfect companion to your morning coffee!



#### A SWEET BOOST TO YOUR DAY

3

The 3 p.m. slump is real, we're here to help! A yummy combination of the best energizing B Vitamins with a kick of Caffeine and milk chocolatey goodness.



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Our mission is to help you feel healthy and happy body, mind and taste buds.

- · Just 3 grams of sugar
- · Only 25 calories
- · No artificial colors or flavors
- · No added preservatives
- Gluten-free & Kosher
- · Made in the USA







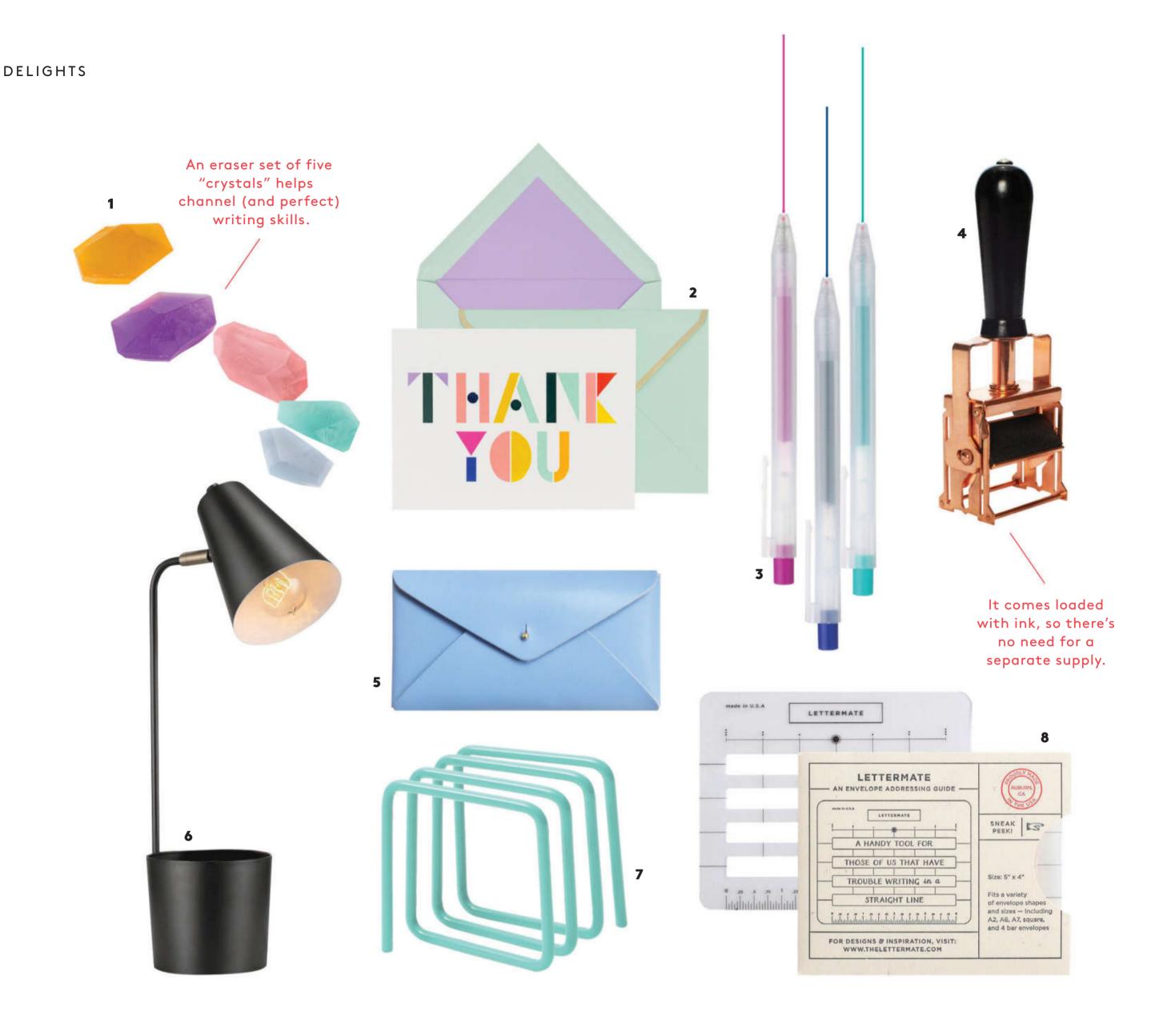






# DELIGHTS





#### **1 CREATIVITY BOOSTER**

Yes, these crystal-inspired erasers are functional, but they're also just plain fun. **TO BUY:** Creativity Crystals Erasers Set, \$16 for 5; chroniclebooks.com.

#### 2 MUCH OBLIGED

Express gratitude with cool graphics and big color.
Even the envelopes in this set are two-tone with gold edges. **TO BUY:** Geo Letter Thank You Notecard Set, \$20 for 10; katespade.com.

#### 3 PRETTY IN INK

This is the only pen that Real Simple's creative director (an avid note taker) uses. Choose from 16 colors. **TO BUY:** Smooth Gel Ink Ballpoint Pens, \$1.50 each; muji.com/us.

#### 4 HAPPY RETURNS

It's a splurge, but this copper stamp lets you swap in new plates if your address changes. **TO BUY:** Self-Inking Custom Rubber Stamp, from \$150; wmscoink.com.

#### 5 STAY COMPOSED

Stash writing tools in style—and take them on the go—with this chic, envelope-shaped leather case. **TO BUY:** Envelope Pencil Case, \$30; presentandcorrect.com.

#### **6** BRIGHT STORAGE

The open base of this lamp has plenty of space for pens and office supplies.

TO BUY: Globe Electric Taylor Desk Lamp, from \$29; homedepot.com.

#### 7 CURB THE CLUTTER

Is it an objet or an organizer? You decide.
Use it to corral mail and important papers.

TO BUY: Block Design Letter Rack, \$19; store.aia.org.

#### 8 JUSTIFY YOURSELF

Keeping lines straight, centered, and evenly spaced is a breeze with this trusty envelope-writing template. **TO BUY:** Lettermate Addressing Guide, \$10; papersource.com.



#### TALK TO YOUR ECZEMA SPECIALIST AND VISIT DUPIXENT.COM OR CALL 1-844-DUPIXENT (1-844-387-4936) ——

#### **INDICATION**

DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used to treat people aged 6 years and older with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (eczema) that is not well controlled with prescription therapies used on the skin (topical), DUPIXENT can be used with or without topical corticosteroids. It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with atopic dermatitis under Tell your healthcare provider 6 years of age.

**Do not use** if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT®.

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you: have eye problems; have a parasitic (helminth) infection; are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should treated with DUPIXENT; are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby. There is women who take DUPIXENT during effects, including:

about the health of you and your including a severe reaction known or call 1-800-FDA-1088. baby. Your healthcare provider can as anaphylaxis. Stopusing DUPIXENT use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed. Your healthcare provider or To get more information about the getemergency help right away if you registry call 1-877-311-8972 or go to get any of the following symptoms: https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-breathingproblems, fever, general ill or who cannot use topical therapies. study/dupixent/; are breastfeeding feeling, swollen lymph nodes, swelling or plan to breastfeed. It is not known of the face, mouth and tongue, hives, whether DUPIXENT passes into your itching, fainting, dizziness, feeling

herbal supplements.

if you are taking oral, topical or inhaled patients with atopic dermatitis corticosteroid medicines or if you have include injection site reactions, eye atopic dermatitis and asthma and use and eyelid inflammation, including an asthma medicine. **Do not** change redness, swelling, and itching, and cold or stop your corticosteroid medicine sores in your mouth or on your lips. or other asthma medicine without Tell your healthcare provider if you medicine or other asthma medicine of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for to come back.

pregnancy to collect information Allergicreactions (hypersensitivity), the FDA. Visitwww.fda.gov/medwatch, joint pain, or skin rash.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION including prescription and over- provider if you have any new or the-counter medicines, vitamins and worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision.

Especially tell your healthcare provider The most common side effects in

not receive a "live vaccine" if you are talking to your healthcare provider. have any side effect that bothers Please see Brief Summary on next page. This may cause other symptoms that you or that does not go away. These were controlled by the corticosteroid are not all the possible side effects SANOFI GENZYME TREGENERON medical advice about side effects. You © 2020 Sanofi and Regeneron a pregnancy exposure registry for DUPIXENT can cause serious side are encouraged to report negative Pharmaceuticals, Inc. side effects of prescription drugs to All Rights Reserved. DUP.20.05.0084

Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it. DUPIXENT is an injection given under the skin (subcutaneous injection). If your healthcare provider decides that lightheaded (low blood pressure), you or a caregiver can give DUPIXENT injections, you or your caregiver about all the medicines you take, Eye problems. Tell your healthcare should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider. In children 12 years of age and older, it is recommended that DUPIXENT be administered by or under supervision of an adult. In children younger than 12 years of age, DUPIXENT should be given by a caregiver.

# Brief Summary of Important Patient Information about DUPIXENT® (dupilumab) Rx Only (DU-pix'-ent)

#### injection, for subcutaneous use

#### **What is DUPIXENT?**

- DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used:
- to treat people aged 6 years and older with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (eczema) that is not well controlled with prescription therapies used on the skin (topical), or who cannot use topical therapies. DUPIXENT can be used with or without topical corticosteroids.
- DUPIXENT works by blocking two proteins that contribute to a type of inflammation that plays a major role in atopic dermatitis.
- It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with atopic dermatitis under 6 years of age.

#### Who should not use DUPIXENT?

**Do not use DUPIXENT** if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT. See the end of this summary of information for a complete list of ingredients in DUPIXENT.

#### What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DUPIXENT? Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have eye problems
- have a parasitic (helminth) infection
- are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a "live vaccine" if you are treated with DUPIXENT.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby.
  - Pregnancy Exposure Registry. There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Your healthcare provider can enroll you in this registry. You may also enroll yourself or get more information about the registry by calling 1 877 311-8972 or going to https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

#### **Especially tell your healthcare provider if you:**

- are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines
- have atopic dermatitis and asthma and use an asthma medicine

**Do not** change or stop your corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by the corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine to come back.

#### **How should I use DUPIXENT?**

- See the detailed "Instructions for Use" that comes with DUPIXENT for information on how to prepare and inject DUPIXENT and how to properly store and throw away (dispose of) used DUPIXENT pre-filled syringes and pre-filled pens.
- Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it.
- DUPIXENT comes as a single-dose pre-filled syringe with needle shield or as a pre-filled pen.
- DUPIXENT is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give the injections of DUPIXENT, you or your caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider. In children 12 years of age and older, it is recommended that DUPIXENT be administered by or under supervision of an adult. In children younger than 12 years of age, DUPIXENT should be given by a caregiver.

- If your dose schedule is every other week and you miss a dose of **DUPIXENT:** Give the DUPIXENT injection within 7 days from the missed dose, then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, wait until the next scheduled dose to give your DUPIXENT injection.
- If your dose schedule is every 4 weeks and you miss a dose of **DUPIXENT:** Give the DUPIXENT injection within 7 days from the missed dose, then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, start a new every 4 week dose schedule from the time you remember to take your DUPIXENT injection.
- If you inject more DUPIXENT than prescribed, call your healthcare provider right away.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe other medicines to use with DUPIXENT.
   Use the other prescribed medicines exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to.

### What are the possible side effects of DUPIXENT? DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

- Allergic reactions (hypersensitivity), including a severe reaction known as anaphylaxis. Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following symptoms: breathing problems, fever, general ill feeling, swollen lymph nodes, swelling of the face, mouth and tongue, hives, itching, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded (low blood pressure), joint pain, or skin rash.
- **Eye problems.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision.

The most common side effects of DUPIXENT in patients with atopic dermatitis include: injection site reactions, eye and eyelid inflammation, including redness, swelling and itching, and cold sores in your mouth or on your lips. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

#### General information about the safe and effective use of DUPIXENT.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use DUPIXENT for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give DUPIXENT to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about DUPIXENT for this use. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for more information about DUPIXENT that is written for healthcare professionals.

For more information about DUPIXENT, go to www.DUPIXENT.com or call 1-844-DUPIXENT (1-844-387-4936)

#### What are the ingredients in DUPIXENT?

Active ingredient: dupilumab

**Inactive ingredients:** L-arginine hydrochloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium acetate, sucrose, and water for injection

Manufactured by: Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Tarrytown, NY 10591 U.S. License # 1760; Marketed by sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC, (Bridgewater, NJ 08807) and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Tarrytown, NY 10591) DUPIXENT® is a registered trademark of Sanofi Biotechnology / ©2020 Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. / sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC. All rights reserved. Issue Date: June 2020

# The Books List Top Picks for Every Taste

BY KRISTYN KUSEK LEWIS

#### **Witty Memoir**

Elizabeth Passarella is a Southerner and evangelical Christian raising three kids on New York City's famously liberal Upper West Side. In Good Apple, she details, with often hilarious transparency, what it's like to bear seemingly contradictory labels, and how her relationship with religion has shaped her identity—and influenced her rebellion.

#### **Inspiring Essays**

Alexi Pappas has a no-limits approach to life that's led her to the Ivy League, an Olympic running career, and starring roles in movies she herself created (even though she was, of course, told to choose between being an athlete and being an artist). In *Bravey*, her movingly honest memoir, she shares how her most difficult moments her mother's death by suicide, her post-Olympic depression fueled her remarkable drive. The result is an engaging portrayal of resilience, proving

#### **Powerful Debut**

The heavy emotion on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is breathlessly conveyed in City of a Thousand Gates. Novelist Rebecca Sacks deftly zooms in on the perspectives of a broad cast of characters, like a new father with an American wife, and a college student illegally entering Israeli territory for work. She reveals with startling intimacy what it's like to live in the center of one of the world's most divisive conflicts.

### Comforting Read

This Close to Okay by Leesa Cross-Smith opens with divorced therapist Tallie Clark driving home from work. She notices a man standing on the edge of a bridge, coaxes him back, then persuades him to have a cup of coffee with her. What happens next makes for a poignant page-turner about perseverance and two broken people who, like all of us at one time or another, just need someone to tell them everything's going to be all right.

#### **Historical Fiction**

Kristin Hannah's latest. set in the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression, centers on a Texas mother forced to decide whether to leave her family's farm, destroyed by drought, for better opportunity out west. The Four Winds is a sweeping epic about an American struggling to keep her family afloat. It feels eerily timely as it highlights the ways women rally during a national crisis.



1

#### **REINVENTED VASE**

With one twist, this
10-inch vase drains old
water. Twist again and the
bottom pops off, so you
can trim stems to help
flowers last. **TO BUY:**The Amaranth Vase, \$60;
amazon.com.



4

#### **ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE**

Get peace of mind on road trips from this onepound workhorse: It can jump a car battery, charge a phone, and flash five emergency light combos. **TO BUY:** 12V Multifunction Jump Starter with LED Light, \$100; worx.com.



2

#### **LUMBAR LOVER**

lf you have an achy-breaky back, plop this memory foam cushion onto a chair, sofa, or driver's seat and feel the contours support your spine.

TO BUY: Back Relief Lumbar Pillow, \$60; thecushionlab.com.



BY BRANDI BROXSON



5

#### WHO'S A DRY DOGGY?

This absorbent towel has pockets for your hands to help you easily dry your wiggly pup after a bath or romp in the rain.

TO BUY: Green Earth Quick Dry Dog Towel, \$26; thecompanystore.com.



#### **CLEAN-COUNTER HQ**

As you whip up your world-famous chili, this tray will hold three spoons and a pot lid, keeping your counter tidy. Pop it into the dishwasher when you're done. **TO BUY:** Stainless Steel Spoon Rest with Lid Holder, \$20; oxo.com.



6

#### **FRESH IDEA**

Plug in this diffuser and dispense designer fragrances (like Thymes and Apotheke) on demand from your phone. You can even control the intensity.

TO BUY: Pura Smart Device, \$44; trypura.com.



Capital One Shopping instantly searches for available coupon codes and automatically applies them. And it's free for everyone. Just download it to your computer. **It's kinda genius.** 





#### **GENIUS BEAUTY**

# Glow-Getter Skin

Plus seven other beauty buys to simplify your routine

BY HEATHER MUIR MAFFEI

#### JLo Beauty That JLo Glow in a Multitasking Serum

What's the Jennifer "Glopez" secret to luminous skin at 51 years of age? Sunscreen, sleep, and this serum with extra-virgin olive oil—a special ingredient passed down from Lopez's mom. And just like the actor, singer, dancer, and producer, the serum does it all: protects, brightens, tightens, and hydrates for immediate, long-lasting radiance. **TO BUY:** \$79; sephora.com.

1 SUSTAINABLE

**Honest Beauty** 

**Reusable Magic** 

stretchy one goes

in ingredients. After

10 minutes, remove,

for months! **TO BUY:** 

\$15; honest.com.

**Dove Nourishing** 

**Hand Sanitizers** 

These pumps pack

hol to fight germs—

it, based on how

The shea butter

scent is delicious.

**TO BUY:** \$5 each:

**3 BELIEVABLE** 

**Merit Beauty** 

Pop these buttery

with your fingers to

Zoom and beyond.

**TO BUY:** \$28 each;

meritbeauty.com.

Flush Balm

target.com.

**BLUSH** 

soothed skin feels.

**MASK** 



#### **4 FRESHER EYES**

#### **CoverGirl Simply Ageless Skin Eye Lift Serum**

This tightens as it dries to smooth and depuff, helping you fake a full eight hours. You can even wear it over concealer.

**TO BUY:** \$14; ulta.com.

#### **5 HEALTHIER HAIR**

#### **Crave Naturals Glide Thru Detangler Hair Brush**

With this brush's ergonomic shape and flexible bristles, knots are no longer such a pain. Each purchase supports Wigs for Kids. **TO BUY:** \$15; cravenaturals.com.

#### **6 ZIT-ZAPPING TOWEL**

#### **Resorè Face Wash Cloth**

This cloudlike Turkishcotton towel (in white and beige) contains antibacterial fibers to break down blemishcausing microbes while removing oil. **TO BUY:** \$35; nordstrom.com.

#### **7 SKIN DRINK**

#### **Burt's Bees Truly Glowing Glow Booster**

Supercharge any face lotion by adding three drops of this antioxidant-rich jojoba seed oil serum. Mix, then press into skin. **TO BUY:** \$18; burtsbees.com.



#### **Quick Ideas**

#### **CINNAMON-SUGAR** COOKIES

Place 1 thawed puff pastry sheet on a surface sprinkled with sugar. Combine 1/4 cup sugar, 1/4 cup finely chopped pecans, and 1/4 tsp. cinnamon in a small bowl. Brush pastry with 1 beaten egg and sprinkle with pecan mixture. Roll into a tight log; freeze for 15 minutes. Cut into 24 slices and sprinkle with 2 Tbsp. sugar. Bake at 450°F on a parchment-lined pan until browned, 9 minutes. Flip and bake for 5 minutes.

#### **PIZZA CROISSANTS**

Cut 1 thawed puff pastry sheet into 6 triangles. Top evenly with 3 Tbsp. marinara sauce, 1/2 cup shredded Italian cheese blend, and 1/4 cup pepperoni slices. Starting with widest end, roll each triangle. Place, tip side down, on a parchment-lined pan. Brush with 1 beaten egg and sprinkle with 1/4 tsp. oregano. Bake at 325°F until golden, 40 minutes.

#### **CHICKEN POTPIE**

Melt 2 Tbsp. butter in a large, oven-safe skillet over medium-high. Stir in 2 Tbsp. flour, then 3 cups shredded cooked chicken, 21/2 cups frozen vegetable blend, 2 cups chicken broth, ½ cup heavy cream, and 2 tsp. fresh thyme. Bring to a boil. Top with 1 thawed puff pastry sheet. Bake at 425°F until browned, about 18 minutes.

By Jenna Helwig Recipes by Anna Theoktisto

# Sharpen Up Lasagna Night

No other cheddar makes these Cheddar Lasagna Roll Ups so irresistibly delicious. Melt Cabot farmers' award-winning best to gooey perfection for a deliciously simple twist on a classic.



In 2012, Cabot became the world's 1<sup>ST</sup> B Corp Certified dairy co-op.



#### **Meet the Owners HERMAN VEGA AND EDUARDO RODRIGUEZ**

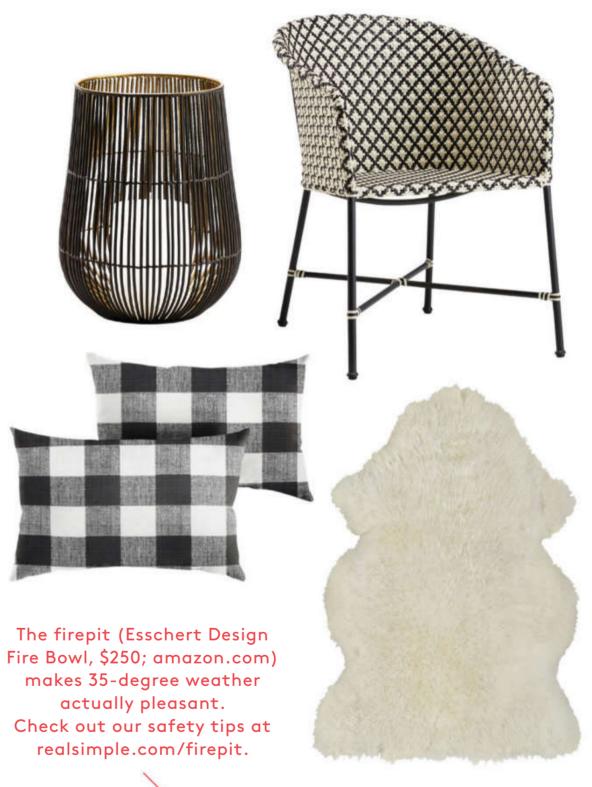
This artistic couple has deep roots in the design world: Herman (below, left) is the creative director at People en Español, and Eduardo is an interior designer (dsgner.nyc). They've furnished the deck and patio of their home in New York's Catskill Mountains to reflect their luxuriousbut-approachable aesthetic and welcome guests year-round while practicing social distancing. Sure, it gets cold out there, but they stay warm the old-fashioned way, "with lots of firewood!" Here's how to bring their entertaining style to your own backyard.



To avoid smoke in your eyes, use very dry firewood, and stack logs in the shape of a teepee or log cabin to maximize airflow.



#### **Get the Look**



#### LAYER LIGHTING

for a glowy, inviting atmosphere. Lanterns and an outdoor floor lamp add ambience and illuminate the steps for safety. TO BUY: Kent Wire Hurricane Candle Holder, from \$15; crateandbarrel.com.

#### **CREATE "ROOMS"**

by arranging furniture in distinct seating areas. Hang string lights to form a "ceiling" overhead. TO BUY: Brava Dining Lounge Wicker Chair, \$329; cb2.com.

WARM UP your outdoor decor (and keep people toasty) with pillows, throws, and faux sheepskins. TO BUY: Buffalo Plaid Lumbar Pillows, \$37.50 for 2; qvc.com. Rens Sheepskin, \$30; ikea-usa.com.



# The Perfect Hands-Free Bag

BY EMILY KEHE
Real Simple Creative Director



Last year, I didn't want to put my bag down anywhere. (Grocery cart germs? Ew!) Still, I needed to carry around all my stuff, so I got the State Lorimer Fanny Pack. I love it because it holds everything I need to run errands, walk the dog, and take my kids to the playground. My keys, phone, wallet, mask, and hand sanitizer snuggle inside the two easy-access zippered pockets. On rainy days, it can accommodate a travel umbrella. When I'm on a long walk, it can fit a small water bottle. I never leave home without it, and—full disclosure—I've even taken to wearing it around inside my house. That's how soft and comfortable it is.





Your emotions change. That's why MyLife™ offers a personalized mindfulness solution, any time of day.



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# & Lean cuisine.

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**370 CALORIES** 

**17G PROTEIN** 

1/2 CUP VEGGIES



%Lean cuisine.

bowls

high protein

SAVORY

# GUIDES





#### **CLEAN THIS**

#### THE KITCHEN SINK

Give the hardworking zone a little TLC, and get it squeaky-clean with supplies you can probably find, well, under your kitchen sink.

BY LESLIE CORONA

#### Do This...

#### **DAILY**

Scrub your sink as part of your post-dinner routine, with your regular sponge and dish soap. Remove lingering food particles first, and never use steel wool or any kind of scouring pad. The material is too abrasive no matter what your sink is made of.

#### **EVERY TWO WEEKS**

Run the strainer through the dishwasher, and do a deeper clean of the basin with a gentle abrasive powder or a paste of baking soda and hydrogen peroxide. Sprinkle the powder or spread the paste all over the surface, then scrub back and forth with a fresh, damp sponge. Start from the top of the sink's sides, working your way down. Use a small brush to degunk around the drain and the edge of the basin. Rinse away residue with warm water, and dry the sink

completely with a microfiber towel—this is especially important if you have hard water, which can leave spots. If you notice spots, dip a cloth into a 50-50 solution of water and white vinegar and rub them off. Rinse with water and dry.

#### ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS

To disinfect, add one-third cup of bleach to a gallon of roomtemperature water, then apply the mixture to the sink with a clean sponge. Let it sit for six minutes, or according to the bleach's instructions. Rinse thoroughly and let air-dry.

#### BUT DON'T DO THIS

Never scrub in a circular motion if you have a stainless-steel sinkit can ruin the finish! Follow the steel's grain instead, working in a back-and-forth motion.



### ...With These

**ABRASIVE POWDER** 

Try a gentle one that's safe for stainless steel and porcelain, like Bar Keepers Friend (\$2.50; homedepot.com).



#### **NONSCRATCH SPONGE**

Scotch-Brite's Advanced Scrub Dots Non-Scratch Scrubbers will do the job (\$4 for 2; walmart.com).



#### **DISHWASHING GLOVES**

Use them to protect your hands when disinfecting. We like Casabella's Waterblock Gloves (\$7; containerstore.com).



#### **DETAIL BRUSH**

Keep a small brush nearby for crevices and corners. Try Full Circle's Micro Manager Detail Brush (\$5; amazon.com).



#### **MICROFIBER TOWEL**

After deep-cleaning, dry surfaces with Grove Collaborative's All-Purpose Microfiber Cloths (\$10 for 3; grove.co).

#### **OUR EXPERTS**

KENNETH BARTA, MANAGER OF PRODUCT ENGINEERING AT ELKAY IN DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS

TANYA HOLLAND, CELEBRITY CHEF AND TV HOST

JILL NYSTUL, CREATOR OF THE LIFESTYLE SITE ONE GOOD THING BY JILLEE

#### **NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS: FLOUR**

For a truly shiny sink, sprinkle a handful of all-purpose flour into the freshly cleaned, totally dry basin. Buff the flour over the surface in small, circular motions with a dry cloth. Wipe away any remaining flour when you're done.

#### THINGS COOKS KNOW

# The Sweet Spot

Cutting back on sugar doesn't mean you have to tolerate less-than-stellar baked goods. These expert tricks will help keep your cookies, cakes, and muffins as scrumptious as ever.

BY JENNA HELWIG



#### A BAKING MULTITASKER

Sugar does a lot more than make things sweet. "It provides structure, absorbs moisture, enhances the flavor of other ingredients, ensures spread—in the case of cookies, for example—and activates browning," explains Jennifer Tyler Lee, coauthor of *Half the Sugar, All the Love*. "It also acts as a preservative. Cookies and cakes made with less sugar don't last as long." So rejiggering a recipe can take some trial and error.

#### A GENERAL RULE

The first step to reducing the sugar is...reducing the sugar. Decrease the amount in a cookie, muffin, or quick bread recipe by 25 percent, and see if you like the taste. To offset the reduction, Tyler Lee suggests stirring in naturally sweet ingredients, like finely chopped dates or raisins. "Toasted nuts or seeds can also add flavor and texture. And consider upping any extracts or citrus zest in the recipe by 50 percent for extra oomph." Also, adding a quarter teaspoon of baking soda to lower-sugar cookies can help create a chewy texture.

#### **SUGAR IS SUGAR**

As Atlanta-based dietitian Marisa Moore, RDN, puts it, "If you think substituting less-refined honey, maple syrup, or coconut sugar for granulated sugar in a recipe will make it healthier, think again." To your body, it's all the same. Honey and maple syrup may have trace nutrients, but you'd need to ingest a lot of them to get those benefits. Just use the sweetener the recipe was written for.

#### **SPICE IS NICE**

Adding warm spices, like cinnamon, cloves, and cardamom, can also make the results taste sweeter. Moore says, "I love using cinnamon especially. It adds a hint of sweetness to baked goods, as well as oatmeal and coffee. And we get the added benefit of its bloodsugar-lowering properties."

#### **SURPRISING SWAPS**

Canned pumpkin, mashed sweet potato or bananas, applesauce, pureed Medjool dates or prunes, crushed pineapple, and even blitzed beets can often stand in for some of the sugar in baked goods. But it's not as simple as a cup-forcup substitution, since these moist ingredients can alter the texture. Look for a recipe with a puree in the ingredient list. Pick up a book like Tyler Lee's, or just google something like "beet brownies" and choose a recipe from a trusted source. Not only will you consume less sugar, you'll get a nutrition boost from the fruit or veggie you replace the sweet stuff with.

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**Nearly twice as much folate** 

(vitamin B9)\*-great for expectant mothers

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Twice as much iodine\* for thyroid health

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# COMMA HOME FOR THE WIN

#### **Bamboo Weighted Blanket**

When several testers independently said, "This blanket was like a warm hug," we knew we were onto something. "I love the look and feel of this blanket," one reviewer told us. "It looks like an expensive quilt, and I really enjoyed the smooth, cool feel of the fabric." Another reviewer had never used a weighted blanket before and found it eye-opening that it improved his sleep. The 15-pound weight was deemed just right, and the bamboo-viscose material wicked away moisture. Plus, the company donates 10 percent of sales to organizations helping people without homes—making this a feel-good purchase in more ways than one. TO BUY: \$149; commahome.com.

#### FOR DUELING COUPLES

#### **Sleep Number Create Your Perfect Comforter**

"This is a game changer! No more pushing and pulling the comforter all night," said Jenna Helwig, Real Simple's food director, who was tired of the nightly games of tug-of-war with her husband. Each person orders a half-size comforter with their desired warmth level (light, medium, or extra). When the two halves arrive, you button them together to make a luxurious-feeling, attractive comforter. (Given its button center, though, you'll probably want to glam it up with a duvet cover.) "Having one comforter with different levels of warmth is a dream come true," Jenna said. TO BUY: From \$80 per half; sleepnumber.com.

#### **COOLING SHEETS**

#### My Sheets Rock The Regulator

The unique bamboo-rayon material of this bedding set wicks away moisture while being soft and durable—and our testers raved about the sheets' cooling powers. "These sheets are amazing. There are days when I wake up soaked in sweat. With these, I woke up completely dry," said one editor who sweats intensely due to a medication side effect. Another staffer said, "These sheets stayed cool, and I didn't have to kick my comforter off in the middle of the night like I usually do." TO BUY: From \$139; mysheetsrock.com.

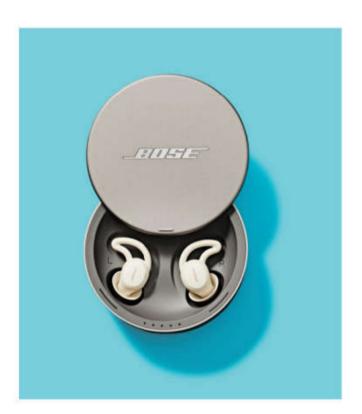
### **Best Sound Machines**

#### TOP PICK

#### LectroFan Classic

We were wowed by the customization this soothing little sleep aid offers. You can choose 10 different fan sounds, from industrial to vent to oscillating. Or opt for one of 10 white noise variations, including classic white (the sound of TV static), brown noise (the low hum of a brass instrument), and the new sleep-friendly darling, pink noise (akin to falling rain). You're certain to find the perfect tone to lull you to sleep. "It's on par with my air conditioner, which drowns out noise in the summer," one enthusiastic tester said. To BUY: \$50; soundofsleep.com.





#### HONORABLE MENTION

(FOR LUXURY SOUND)

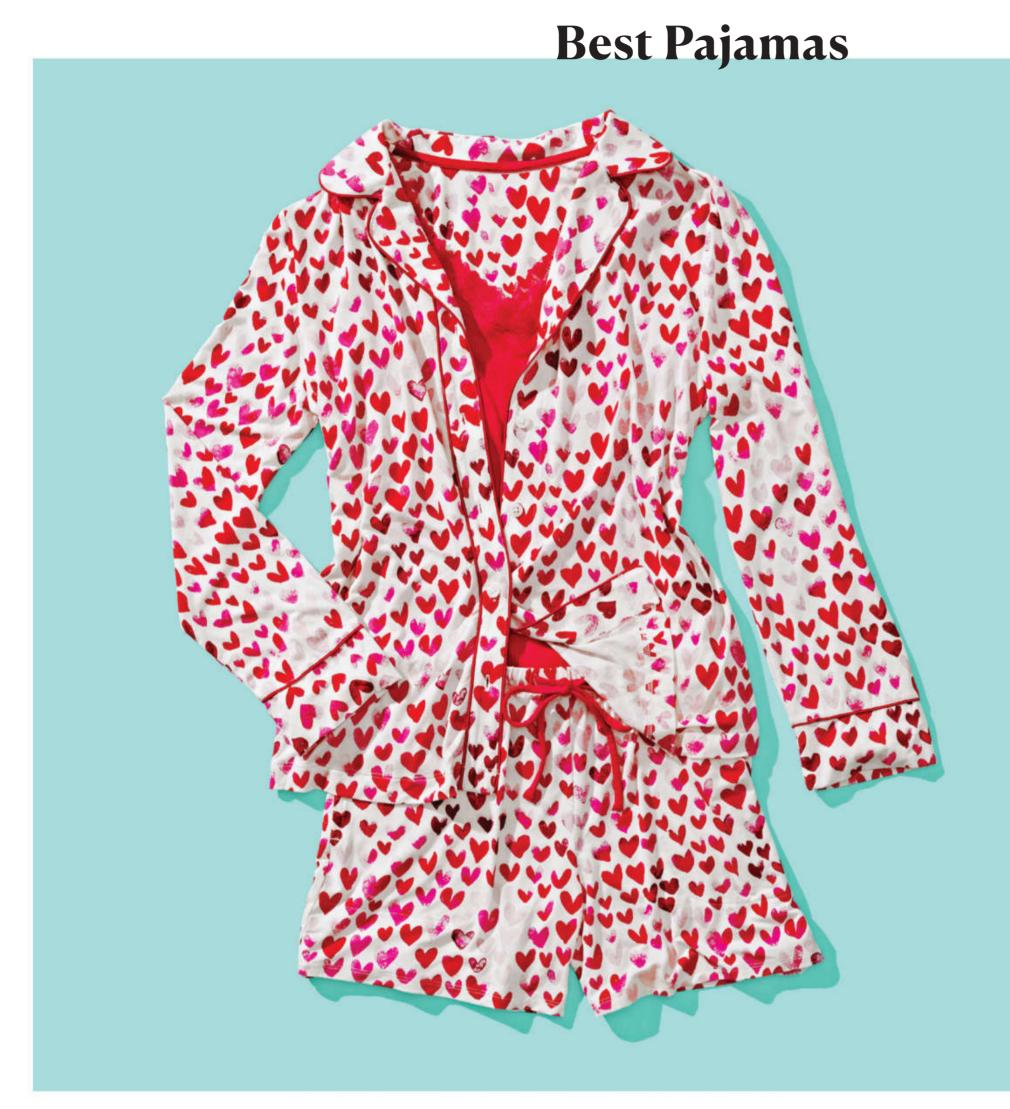
#### **Bose Sleepbuds II**

Though a splurge, these earplug superheroes offer the priceless gift of blocking the sound of a snoring spouse or busy city street. The soft buds come in three sizes to ensure a comfortable seal in your ear. The companion app pipes in relaxing sounds (including specially engineered noise-masking tones) that you can play all night or set with a timer. "I must have fallen asleep within seven minutes. They effectively blocked street noise," said Rachel Sylvester, a Real Simple senior editor. "The sound is really high quality," another tester said. "It's like sea waves breaking right outside your door. They are comfortable to sleep in, and I despise earplugs." To BUY: \$250; bose.com.

# Best **Relaxation App**

#### **Sleep by Headspace**

The Sleep section in the meditation app Headspace brings soothing to a new level. The "sleepcasts" offer meditation via storytelling; in one, a gentle voice leads you through an antiques store on a rainy day. The "Nighttime SOS" collection provides guided exercises if you wake up in the middle of the night. ("I so needed these!" one reviewer said.) "Wind downs" are exercises like body scans, which come in handy for sleep and morning meditation. TO BUY: \$13 per month, \$70 per year; headspace.com.



# Soma Cool Nights

"Soft, light, comfortable, and flattering," our editors raved about these pajamas made with lightweight rayon. Hot sleepers gave them high marks for their immediate cooling effect and the "airy, not synthetic-feeling" fabric. **The Cool Nights collection** includes many styles—such as camis, T-shirts, shorts, and pants—that go up to size XXL. Choose pieces à la carte to create the perfect set for your body and temperature preference. "Putting these on got me excited for bedtime, and I didn't want to take them off the next day," said Jenny Brown, Real Simple's copy and research chief. TO BUY: From \$32 for bottoms, from \$34 for tops; soma.com.

# **Best Pillow Spray**

#### **This Works Deep Sleep Pillow Spray**

This essential oil formula, laced with chamomile, vetivert, and lavender, has become the gold standard of pillow mists. (The company was founded by a former Vogue UK beauty director.) The spa-scented elixir, which you spritz lightly onto your pillowcase or pj's, won the hearts—and z's—of our testers. "I sprayed my pillow after waking up early and went back to sleep until 9 a.m. I haven't slept that late in years," said Filomena Guzzardi, Real Simple's editorial production director. Another tester clocked a "rare eight hours" while using it in her noisy apartment. Eco bonus: It's free of phthalates, synthetic color and fragrance, parabens, and GMOs. TO BUY: \$29; us.thisworks.com.

### **Best Alarm Clocks**

#### **TOP PICK**

#### Philips SmartSleep Connected Sleep and Wake-Up Light

The incredible range of features is sure to impress—and improve your slumber. The clock analyzes room temperature, noise levels, light, and humidity to generate tips to improve your sleep environment. "Turns out my bedroom is warmer than ideal, which may be one reason I'm a sweaty sleeper," a tester said. The sunset and sunrise settings help optimize bedroom lighting for sleep: "Waking up to a soft glow and birds chirping was so, so, so pleasant," a reviewer noted. The blaring PowerWake setting was also appreciated, for those days when a gentle nudge doesn't cut it. TO BUY: \$200; philips.com.



#### HONORABLE **MENTION**

(FOR BREAKING BAD SMARTPHONE HABITS)

#### Loftie

This amped-up version of a traditional alarm clock aims to stop nighttime doomscrolling. It offers key functions to encourage you to leave your phone out of reach. The two-alarm system (a soft ping to rouse you, followed by a stronger one to get you out of bed) is "a great, gentler way to wake up," said Leslie Corona, Real Simple's senior associate home editor. She didn't realize how much the ambient light of her usual clock was interfering with her sleep until she tried Loftie's blackout feature, which dims the digits for lightsensitive sleepers. TO BUY: \$165; byloftie.com.

#### **BEST WEARABLE TECH**

#### **Fitbit Sense**

As you snooze, Fitbit's latest sensors keep tabs on your heart rate, skin temp, and oxygen levels to track the length and quality of your sleep. When you wake up, open the app and get your sleep score. "I thought I was sleeping eight hours a night, but I learned I'm only sleeping about six hours, so that was helpful," one reviewer said. The premium app arms you with a library of meditations and breathing exercises to assist with falling asleep or drifting off again if you wake during the night. The watch also tracks other health metrics, like steps, irregular heartbeats, and menstrual cycles. TO BUY: \$329; fitbit.com.





# = A CHANCE FOR MORE SNUGGLY SUNDAYS

# **A Chance to Live Longer™**

# THE 1<sup>ST</sup> AND ONLY FDA-APPROVED **CHEMO-FREE COMBINATION** OF 2 IMMUNOTHERAPIES THAT WORKS DIFFERENTLY

In a study of newly diagnosed advanced NSCLC patients, half of those on OPDIVO + YERVOY were alive at 17.1 months versus 14.9 months on platinum-based chemotherapy.

Results may vary. OPDIVO® + YERVOY® is not approved for patients younger than 18 years of age.

# Indication & Important Safety Information for OPDIVO (nivolumab) + YERVOY (ipilimumab)

Only your healthcare professional knows the specifics of your condition and how OPDIVO in combination with YERVOY may fit into your overall therapy. The information below does not take the place of talking with your healthcare professional, so talk to them if you have any questions.

#### What are OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are prescription medicines used to treat people with a type of advanced stage lung cancer called non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). OPDIVO may be used in combination with YERVOY as your first treatment for NSCLC when your lung cancer has spread to other parts of your body (metastatic) **and** your tumors are positive for PD-L1, but do not have an abnormal EGFR or ALK gene.

It is not known if OPDIVO and YERVOY are safe and effective when used in children younger than 18 years of age.

# What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are medicines that may treat certain cancers by working with your immune system. OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause your immune system to attack normal organs and tissues in any area of your body and can affect the way they work. These problems can sometimes become serious or life-threatening and can lead to death and may happen anytime during treatment or even after your treatment has ended. You may have more than one of these problems at the same time. Some of these problems may happen more often when OPDIVO is used in combination with YERVOY.

# Call or see your healthcare provider right away if you develop any new or worse signs or symptoms, including

- Lung problems: new or worsening cough; shortness of breath; chest pain
- Intestinal problems: diarrhea (loose stools) or more frequent bowel movements than usual; stools that are black, tarry, sticky, or have blood or mucus; severe stomach-area (abdominal) pain or tenderness
- Liver problems: yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes; severe nausea or vomiting; pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen); dark urine (tea colored); bleeding or bruising more easily than normal

- Hormone gland problems: headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches; eye sensitivity to light; eye problems; rapid heartbeat; increased sweating; extreme tiredness; weight gain or weight loss; feeling more hungry or thirsty than usual; urinating more often than usual; hair loss; feeling cold; constipation; your voice gets deeper; dizziness or fainting; changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness
- Kidney problems: decrease in the amount of urine; blood in your urine; swelling in your ankles; loss of appetite
- **Skin problems:** rash; itching; skin blistering or peeling; painful sores or ulcers in mouth or nose, throat, or genital area
- Eye problems: blurry vision, double vision, or other vision problems; eye pain or redness

Problems can also happen in other organs and tissues. These are not all of the signs and symptoms of immune system problems that can happen with OPDIVO and YERVOY. Call or see your healthcare provider right away for any new or worsening signs or symptoms, which may include:

- Chest pain; irregular heartbeat; shortness of breath; swelling of ankles
- Confusion; sleepiness; memory problems; changes in mood or behavior; stiff neck; balance problems; tingling or numbness of the arms or legs
- Double vision; blurry vision; sensitivity to light; eye pain; changes in eye sight
- Persistent or severe muscle pain or weakness; muscle cramps
- Low red blood cells; bruising

**Getting medical help right away may help keep these problems from becoming more serious.** Your healthcare team will check
you for these problems during treatment and may treat you with
corticosteroid or hormone replacement medicines. Your healthcare
team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment if you
have severe side effects.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY? Before you receive OPDIVO and YERVOY, tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have immune system problems such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, or lupus
- have received an organ transplant



- have received or plan to receive a stem cell transplant that uses donor stem cells (allogeneic)
- have received radiation treatment to your chest area in the past and have received other medicines that are like OPDIVO
- have a condition that affects your nervous system, such as myasthenia gravis or Guillain-Barré syndrome
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. OPDIVO and YERVOY can harm your unborn baby
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if OPDIVO or YERVOY passes into your breast milk. Do not breastfeed during treatment with OPDIVO or YERVOY and for 5 months after the last dose of OPDIVO or YERVOY

**Females who are able to become pregnant:** Your healthcare provider should do a pregnancy test before you start receiving OPDIVO or YERVOY.

- You should use an effective method of birth control during your treatment and for at least 5 months after your last dose of OPDIVO or YERVOY. Talk to your healthcare provider about birth control methods that you can use during this time.
- Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant or think you are pregnant during treatment with OPDIVO or YERVOY. You or your healthcare provider should contact Bristol Myers Squibb at 1-844-593-7869 as soon as you become aware of the pregnancy.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare providers and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

What are the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY? OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause serious side effects, including:

- See "What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO + YERVOY?"
- Severe infusion reactions. Tell your healthcare team or nurse right away if you get these symptoms during an infusion of OPDIVO or YERVOY: chills or shaking; itching or rash; flushing; shortness of breath or wheezing; dizziness; feel like passing out; fever; back or neck pain

Complications, including graft-versus-host disease (GVHD),
 of bone marrow (stem cell) transplant that uses donor stem
 cells (allogeneic). These complications can be severe and can
 lead to death. These complications may happen if you underwent
 transplantation either before or after being treated with OPDIVO
 or YERVOY. Your healthcare provider will monitor you for these
 complications.

The most common side effects of OPDIVO when used in combination with YERVOY include: feeling tired; diarrhea; rash; itching; nausea; pain in muscles, bones, and joints; fever; cough; decreased appetite; vomiting; stomach-area (abdominal) pain; shortness of breath; upper respiratory tract infection; headache; low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism); decreased weight; and dizziness.

These are not all the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You are encouraged to report side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Call 1-800-FDA-1088.

OPDIVO (10 mg/mL) and YERVOY (5 mg/mL) are injections for intravenous (IV) use.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about OPDIVO and YERVOY. For more information, talk with your healthcare providers, call 1-855-673-4861, or go to www.OPDIVO.com.

### Bristol Myers Squibb

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#### **HEALTHY AT HOME**

# The Doctor Will See You Now... in Your Living Room

Telemedicine is growing, but it has clear pros and cons. Find out which health concerns can be successfully treated from the comfort of your couch.

BY JENNIFER KING LINDLEY

BY NOW, YOU MAY have experienced a taste of telemedicine: You called your doctor about your sore throat and fever and, due to the pandemic, had a virtual visit to sort out whether it was a cold. the flu, Covid-19, or something else altogether. Out of necessity, telemedicine has soared in popularity. Some 46 percent of patients had a virtual visit last year, compared with just 11 percent in 2019, according to a 2020 McKinsey report. "Patients are saying they love the flexibility and convenience," says Paul Testa, MD, an emergency room physician and the chief medical information officer at NYU Langone Health. "Many conditions in medicine can be diagnosed by listening carefully to a patient and taking a history. The idea that we always have to be in the same room to give good care is outdated."

Your first stop on the way to a virtual doctor visit: Check whether your health care provider or insurer has a telemedicine option, so you can see someone in your plan, says Jennifer Mallow, PhD, a nurse practitioner and associate professor of nursing at West Virginia University who researches the uses of telehealth. If you need an alternative, download a medical app that lets you connect with a provider 24/7, such as Doctor On Demand. You can pay a onetime fee (Doctor On Demand charges \$75 for a basic visit) or purchase a plan for ongoing access. (Some insurers also cover app visits.)

Granted, virtual appointments are not appropriate for everything. Many conditions require hands-on exams or tests. Here's how to best use telemedicine in four categories of care.

One strength of virtual urgent care is middle-of-the-night reassurance—
"This can wait until Monday."

#### **Urgent Care**

**WHAT IT'S GOOD FOR:** Respiratory infections, fevers, sore throats, stomach bugs, minor injuries.

WHY IT'S SMART: Who wants to haul their miserable self (or miserable child) to urgent care at 3 a.m. if they don't have to? "Telemedicine is like having a doctor in the family you can call at any hour," says Mara Gordon, MD, a physician in Camden, New Jersey. The doctor can ask questions and conduct a basic visual exam—watching your chest to see if your breathing is labored, say, or noting if your baby appears lethargic or is grabbing playfully at your earrings. "One of its strengths is middle-of-the-night reassurance—'This can wait until Monday," Gordon says.

Ask if your regular doctor's office provides same-day telemedicine visits during nonbusiness hours. On a recent Saturday, when Steve Leser, a dad in New York City, was worried that a boil on his 5-year-old's leg could be a serious staph infection, his pediatrician's office arranged a video consult within hours. "I drained the boil while the doctor watched and gave me instructions through the screen," Steve says. The doctor also prescribed topical and oral antibiotics



via a nearby pharmacy and described the warning signs that might require an in-person followup (which was not needed).

KEEP IN MIND: If you're open to using a 24/7 app for urgent care, it's a good idea to research the terms of service before you find yourself frantically dialing a doc in the wee hours. And continuity of care-what happens after you hang up—can be an issue with a telemedicine app. The provider should tell you how to follow up if you don't feel better in a day or so, says Sana Goldberg, NP, author of How to Be a Patient. You may need to see a pro in person if your kid has an earache: "Without the right at-home tools, it's difficult to get a good look in the ear," says Ian Tong, MD, chief medical officer of the Doctor On Demand app.

#### **Emotional Health**

**WHAT IT'S BEST FOR:** Anxiety, depression, stress, relationship troubles.

WHY IT'S SMART: When you can talk to a therapist without taking a morning off or arranging childcare, it removes barriers to getting help, says Lynn Bufka, PhD, senior director of practice transformation and quality at the American Psychological Association. Research has shown that teletherapy sessions can be as effective as the in-person kind, she adds. (Textonly options are not as well studied.) Indeed, you may be more comfortable unburdening yourself from your own couch, notes Haesue Jo, a licensed therapist with the app BetterHelp. You'll also have more flexibility to seek out a specialist-someone who speaks your language or focuses on specific problems, like panic attacks, Bufka says.

therapist the old-fashioned way, through a referral from a friend or doctor, and ask if you can meet virtually or by phone. Teletherapy apps, like BetterHelp, pair you with a counselor on the platform.



Speaking about private stuff at home may be difficult if you live in close quarters or have small children prone to interrupting; retreat to your car or the bathroom as needed. Bufka suggests looking for a practitioner who's in your city, town, or state: "They're aware of local resources if you need additional support." Many therapy providers scrambled to get virtual services up and running during the pandemic, so ask whether their platform meets Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements, Bufka adds.

#### **Dermatology**

**WHAT IT'S BEST FOR:** Acne, antiaging medications, eczema, weird bumps and spots.

why it's smart: Many dermatology issues can be addressed virtually because they're so visual, says Carrie Kovarik, MD, professor of dermatology at the University of Pennsylvania. A provider can examine your teen's breakout, for example, or prescribe you Retin-A after taking your history and discussing your anti-aging concerns. Derms can also examine

# Most practices are now equipped to see patients online, so ask if aspects of your regular care can be done virtually.

a concerning spot, and either reassure you that it's harmless or advise you to be seen in person. Doctors often ask patients to upload pictures of affected areas as well; most good smartphone cameras are up to the task.

**KEEP IN MIND:** A new growth or a changing mole, which could indicate skin cancer, may have to be seen in office. "We often need to look or feel in person and take a biopsy," Kovarik says. Your annual head-to-toe skin exam also needs to be done in person. Kovarik recommends having your primary care doctor refer you to a dermatologist who offers both in-office and virtual care. "The patient can come in for one appointment, get a thorough history and exam, and then do follow-ups every so often via telemedicine," she says. That way, if you need an in-person visit, you'll have a relationship with a provider who knows your full history. You won't get that from direct-to-consumer dermatologist apps, which specialize in treating specific cosmetic issues. While convenient for getting meds, especially in rural or underserved areas, many of these apps don't guarantee you'll speak to the same doctor each time, Kovarik says.

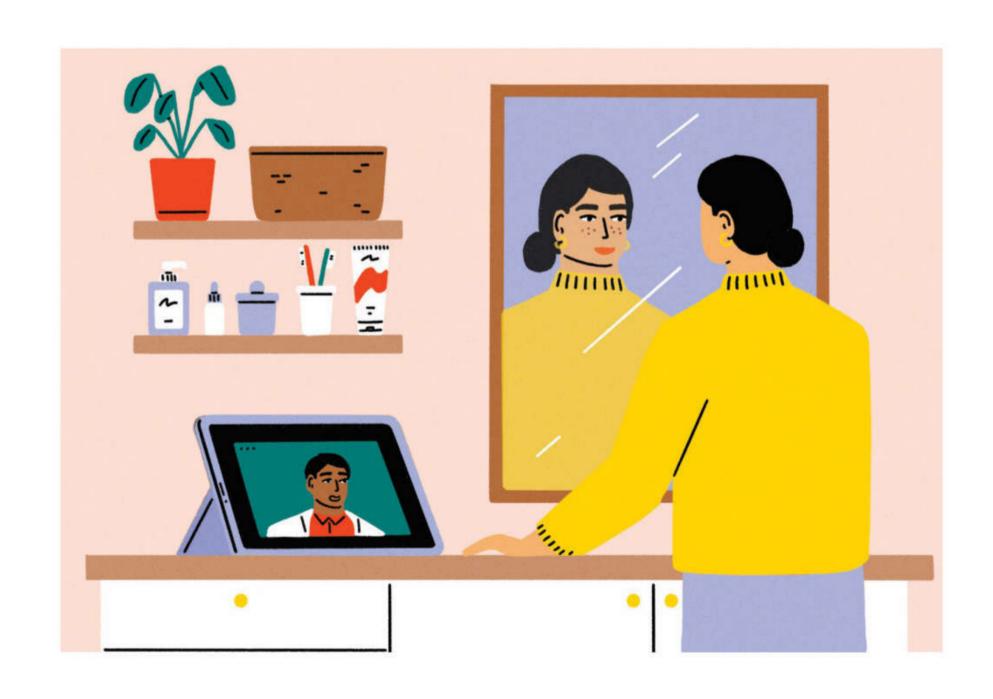
#### **Routine Maintenance**

WHAT IT'S BEST FOR: Follow-up visits, lifestyle changes, medication management.

WHY IT'S SMART: With 76 percent of patients interested in telemedicine and 64 percent of doctors more comfortable with it, according to the McKinsey report, most practices are now equipped to see patients online (thanks, Covid!). Find out if aspects of your regular care can be done virtually, Gordon says. "Call the office and say, 'I want to talk about quitting smoking. Is that something we could handle virtually?" she suggests. Also, ask if follow-up visits really require a several-hours-long trip to the office. Doctors may be able to adjust drug doses or assess progress during a video call. They may

even be able to manage a heart health concern, such as hypertension, from afar by recommending an affordable at-home blood pressure monitor.

**KEEP IN MIND:** Specialized apps can connect you virtually with providers who focus on particular chronic concerns, like allergies or thinning hair. But though these apps may provide fast and convenient treatment, it's still important to have a primary care doctor who knows you well and has access to the big picture, Goldberg says: "This doctor can be your North Star in navigating your health." So if you hit up an app, request records that you can share with your primary provider.





#### PET TRICKS

# Not to Worry

Like us, animals may develop anxiety. These simple steps can help your pet fret less.

BY JUNO DEMELO

#### See the Signs

Anxiety is common, especially in pets who have been rehomed. Loud noises, a change in routine (like a new baby), and even aging can cause anxiety as well. Anxious pets may bark or cry, pace, pant, follow you around, shiver, urinate or defecate in the house (and out of the litter box), or lick their lips excessively. They can become aggressive, growling or hissing when you try to pick them up, or destructive, chewing on a doorframe or crate or scratching the couch.

#### **Clear the Decks**

Talk to your vet to rule out physical ailments, which can manifest as anxiety. Then do your best to minimize triggers: Give your pet a quiet place to escape to during loud dinners. Never punish them or give too much positive attention for anxiety-related behavior, as that can make it worse. Your vet may recommend behavior modification techniques combined with low-dose antidepressants or as-needed tranquilizers.

#### Turn a Negative into a Positive

Counterconditioning, a type of training, is one of the most effective ways to lessen anxiety. You might give your dog a treat-stuffed toy every time you leave the house, or add blankets and catnip to your cat's carrier to turn it into a favorite place (versus a scary cave you drag out only when it's time to go to the vet). If you are dealing with aggression or can't make headway on your own, call in a pro who practices positive-reinforcement or "fear free" training.

#### **OUR EXPERTS**

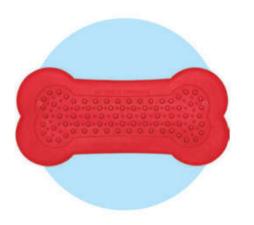
KELLY BALLANTYNE, DVM, VETERINARY BEHAVIORIST AT INSIGHT ANIMAL BEHAVIOR SERVICES IN CHICAGO SHOSHI PARKS, PHD, OWNER AND HEAD TRAINER AT MODERN HOUND IN SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA CHRISTINA V. TRAN, DVM, CLINICAL RELATIONS LEAD VETERINARIAN AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

#### The Gear



#### **CALMING CAP**

The sheer fabric slips over your dog's head and reduces visual stimuli that can be agitating during car rides or vet visits. TO BUY: ThunderCap, \$20; thundershirt.com.



#### **DISTRACTION DEVICE**

Divert attention from a stressful situation by letting your pet lick peanut butter or wet food off this bumpy suction toy. TO BUY: Lick Lick Pad Dog Distraction Lick Mat, \$15; chewy.com.



#### **SOOTHING SCENT**

This diffuser releases a synthetic version of the chemicals cats produce to comfort themselves. TO BUY: Feliway Classic Starter Kit, \$35; feliway.com.





#### THE POWER OF LESS

#### PAPER TOWELS AND NAPKINS

Kicking the single-use habit may seem impossible, but you can make a change one sheet at a time.

BY LAURA FENTON

**EVEN THE MOST** eco-conscious households—ones that reduce, reuse, and recycle on the regular—can tear through roll after roll of paper towels. And while that half sheet might seem like a drop in the bucket (that you—*rip*—quickly wipe up and toss), the production of paper towels takes a toll on the environment, specifically Canada's forests, where much of the wood pulp comes from. "Many people don't make the connection between what they purchase and the clear-cutting of forests," says Jennifer Skene, an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). "When consumers know, they often make the switch."

# With spills, reach for a cloth first not paper towels. Keep separate ones for wiping counters and floors.

The good news is there are plenty of sustainably sourced paper and cloth alternatives on the market—and you don't have to shun paper towels completely. Instead, aim to shop smarter, cut back on the amount you use, and try these ideas.

#### **Get to Less**

#### **EXPLORE YOUR ECO OPTIONS**

Maybe you've tried sustainable paper towels in the past and used huge wads to clean up messes a single conventional sheet would have tackled. But the offerings have improved: We like Seventh Generation for its absorbency. Plus, it got an A rating for sustainability from the NRDC, as did Green Forest (available at King Soopers and on Amazon) and Trader Joe's. On the package, look for a mention of recycled content or the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) logo, which certifies that the product has been made sustainably.

#### **ACQUAINT YOURSELF WITH CLOTH**

For generations, people cleaned with cloths; in fact, after paper towels were invented over 100 years ago, it reportedly took decades for them to catch on! Use different cloths for different tasks: sponges or sponge cloths for dishes and counters, hand towels for hands, and dish towels for drying clean dishes. All can be reused many times. Set aside some rags for extradirty jobs, like big spills and the floor. Launder those after each use (if they're really grimy, give them their own load).

#### MAKE CLOTH CONVENIENT

Stash cleaning rags made from cut-up old cotton T-shirts in grocery bag holders around the house, says Kiesha Yokers, a holistic wellness coach and educator in Thousand Oaks, California. Try the Wall Mount Grocery Bag Dispenser (\$15; simplehuman.com). "If you make them really easy to get to, there's no excuse not to use them," she says. Once you've used a rag, drop it into a laundry basket.

#### AND MAKE PAPER INCONVENIENT

You'll likely always need paper towels in the house (how else to pat down raw chicken?), but if you place the roll a bit out of reach, you'll be prompted to ask yourself, "Do I really need this?" says Friday Apaliski, founder of the Sustainability Concierge, a San Francisco—based service that helps people make their homes more sustainable.

#### **CONSIDER CLOTH NAPKINS**

If your family uses paper napkins at meal-time, switch to cloth ones. They work just as well and are less taxing on the environment. "Cloth napkins are so easy. You just throw them into the wash after a meal or two," Yokers says. If you don't want to use your special-occasion ones, buy a bunch of inexpensive bandanas for everyday use.

# IF YOU DO JUST ONE THING

Shop for paper towels made from recycled content. Check the packaging for the word "postconsumer."

#### **EXTRA CREDIT**

If your preferred paper towel isn't super sustainable, email the company and ask them to use recycled content in their production. It may seem futile, but companies are listening: In 2019, Target introduced Everspring, a brand that offers paper towels made from 100 percent recycled content, citing consumer demand for sustainably made products as one of the reasons they did so.





#### ROAD TEST

# Ooh La La Lashes

Take them from wimpy to wow with six winning enhancers (out of a dozen tested) that helped us bat a thousand.

BY ANNEKE KNOT



#### **BEST BUDGET FRIENDLY**

#### **Maybelline New York The Falsies Lash Mask**

Between less-than-gentle mascara removal habits and years of using extensions, Real Simple beauty director Heather Muir Maffei was seeing major wear and tear on her lashes. "This argan oil and shea butter mask gives my stubs a much-needed spa day," she says. "I brush the lavender-tinted cream onto clean lashes before bed. Don't worry—it doesn't get on my pillowcase. After just a few applications, I have stronger, softer, shinier lashes. They don't look as sad between extension appointments, and my mascara goes on smoother." **TO BUY:** \$7; target.com.



#### **BEST SPLURGE**

#### Dr. Lara Devgan **Scientific Beauty Platinum Long Lash Serum**

Think of each swipe as 50 push-ups for your lashes: Vitamin B<sub>5</sub> and phytopeptides bolster follicles. In a few months, lashes look lush. **TO BUY:** \$150; laradevganmd.com.



#### **BEST PRESCRIPTION**

#### **Latisse by Apostrophe Eyelash Treatment**

Clinically proven to boost length and new growth, this FDA-approved serum is a favorite: one bottle is reportedly sold every 30 seconds. Results take up to 16 weeks. **TO BUY:** \$110; apostrophe.com for info.



#### **BEST PRIMER**

#### **Marc Jacobs Beauty Velvet Primer**

One quick coat makes your favorite mascara work even better. Apply it—the beige color ensures you don't miss a lash—then swipe on mascara for a flutter that rivals falsies. **TO BUY:** \$27; sephora.com.



#### **BEST MULTITASKER**

#### **Grande Cosmetics** GrandeMascara **Conditioning Peptide Mascara**

If you have no time for extra steps, this twofer volumizes like a mascara and conditions like a serum, with peptides and natural waxes for healthierlooking lashes. TO BUY: \$20; grandecosmetics.com.



#### **BEST NATURAL**

#### **Lashfood Phyto-Medic Eyelash Enhancer Serum**

Sensitive eyes? This Ecocert-certified serum uses herbal extracts and amino acids to naturally bulk up lashes in four weeks, minus irritation. **TO BUY:** \$78; lashfood.com.

#### HOW TO WEAR IT

#### A PUFFER VEST FOR ANY VIBE

Cold days call for layering. Stay snug in one of these sleeveless options—and know exactly which way to style it.

BY FLAVIA NUNEZ





#### OVER A CHUNKY TURTLENECK

Double down on boldness by wearing a leopard-print vest and bright yellow sweater. **TO BUY:** Upcycled Lightweight Puffer Vest, \$60; gap.com. The McKenzie Sweater, \$265; mmlafleur.com.

# UNDER A CHORE JACKET

Go ombré with a blush top, slim-fit rust vest, and loose rosy jacket. **TO BUY:** Ultra Light Down Compact Vest, \$40; uniqlo.com. All In Favor Lettuce Edge Rib Top, \$25; nordstrom.com. Will Jacket, \$145; sezane.com.



#### WITH A DRESS

Throw a thigh-length puffer over a printed midi dress and ta-da—you've elongated your figure. **TO BUY:** Down Right Tunic Vest, \$140; duluthtrading.com. Josephine Midi Dress, \$210; bodenusa.com.

what to LOOK for Check the label to find out whether the filling is synthetic (which will keep you warm in cold, wet weather) or down (which is better for dry conditions).



# Share the Love



#### GUIDES





# OVER A JEAN JACKET

Two cowboy
faves—the jean jacket
and the down vest—
pair up for a surprisingly chic look.

TO BUY: Down Winter
Puffer Vest, \$50;
landsend.com. Jane
Jacket, \$199; dl1961
.com. The Remi Wide
Rib Mock Neck, \$68;
525america.com.

#### **WITH A BELT**

Yes, you can accessorize outerwear.
Cinch a belt around the waist to accentuate your curves. **TO BUY:**Tha The Super Puff
Vest, \$198; aritzia.com.
Femme Tactility
Web Belt, \$30;
levi.com. American
Midweight Crew, \$96;
american-giant.com.





#### OVER A STATEMENT-SLEEVE TOP

A faux-leather style brings serious edge to a floral, puffy-sleeve blouse. **TO BUY:** Faux-Leather Gilet, \$100; shop.mango.com. Bloom Mock Neck Top, \$295; rebeccataylor.com.

# Romance by the spoonful.

Fall in love with the deliciously rich texture of Oui French Style Yogurt.



Tastes like 502. of France

INSPIRED BY OUR AUTHENTIC FRENCH RECIPE



#### **BEAUTY HOW-TO**

#### MAKEUP THAT LASTS BENEATH YOUR MASK

A pro offers the best tricks for making smudges and smears things of the past.

BY LISA DESANTIS



1

#### PREP SMART

If you've been experiencing the dreaded "maskne," be extra thorough with your skincare routine-cleanse, moisturize, and apply SPF. Then reach for primer, which is key "if your goal is for makeup to stay in place," says Jamie Greenberg, a celebrity makeup artist in Los Angeles. Shiseido Synchro Skin Soft Blurring Primer (\$36; shiseido.com) is water based, so it's less likely to clog pores and cause zits, and it has peptides and a sebum-absorbing powder to tamp down shine. Greenberg's insider tip: Apply primer with a brush, not your fingers, on oil-prone hot spots, like the T-zone. "This way, you can be diligent about where you put it," she says.



2

#### **USE A LIGHT TOUCH**

"The less makeup you wear under the mask, the better," Greenberg says. Instead of using a heavy foundation all over, she advises spottreating with a cream concealer. We like Younique Touch Skin Solution Concealer (\$29; youniqueproducts.com), which comes in 20 shades. Use the doe-foot applicator to dot it onto red or discolored areas, then dab over it with a damp sponge, like Beautyblender Zodiac (\$20; beauty blender.com). "This gets the concealer just the right consistency," Greenberg says. You don't want it so thick that it collects in fine lines, but you also don't want it to disappear. For a little color on your cheeks, she recommends doubling up on blush. First apply a cream version (she just launched the shimmery Jamie Makeup The Blighlighter, \$34; jamie makeup.com), then a powder in a similar shade.



**3** 

# KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

Mask on or mask off, your eyes will always be visible, so Greenberg suggests pumping up your lashes. If you can splurge, she recommends the Lashify Control Kit (\$145; lashify.com). For a less fussy approach, she likes a fiberinfused lengthening mascara, like Thrive Causemetics Liquid Lash Extensions Mascara (\$24; thrivecausemetics .com). To make your eyes super pretty and noticeable, put a little thought into your mask option. "Certain shades can bring out your eyes," she says. Look for a mask that complements your eye color: Brown eyes? Go for a purple mask. Blue eyes? Try orange.



4

#### **GIVE YOUR LIPS SERVICE**

We get it. You might feel naked without lip color. (If a mask falls off in the woods and no one is there to see it, does it matter if you're wearing lipstick?) You could stick with a simple moisturizing balm, Greenberg says, but if you really want color on your face—and not the inside of your mask—she recommends Maybelline New York Super-Stay Matte Ink Liquid Lipstick in Individualist (\$9; at drugstores), which lasts up to 16 hours. Of course, before slipping on your mask, set the whole look: Brush on a light dusting of translucent powder, then add a few spritzes of a setting spray, moving in Z motions to get all your features. Our favorite makeup mist is CoverGirl Outlast **Active Cooling Setting Mist** (\$7; at drugstores).

# REFRESHED

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# LIVES



# 1

#### Acknowledge it.

Prevent your critic from hijacking your thoughts by simply being more aware of its presence. When your voice speaks up, say to yourself, "That's my inner evaluator talking," and take a few slow, mindful breaths. A healthy inner dialogue is one we're aware of, no matter what it's saying.

RICHARD DAVIDSON, PHD, IS THE WILLIAM JAMES AND VILAS PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON AND FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL'S CENTER FOR HEALTHY MINDS.

## 2

#### Talk back with humor.

Our critic is a habitually negative character—like a pessimistic relative who's invited to every family party. Try to poke some fun at that detractor. I call mine Nigel. In my mind's eye, Nigel is a British interior decorator with impossibly high aesthetic standards. He likes to chime in, "Julia, you're boring." I've learned to say, "To you maybe, but not to my readers."

**JULIA CAMERON** IS THE AUTHOR OF *THE ARTIST'S WAY* AND *THE LISTENING PATH: THE CREATIVE ART OF ATTENTION.* 

# A healthy inner dialogue is one we're aware of, no matter what it's saying.

### 3

# Look at a photo of a loved one.

Thinking about others who care about us reminds us there are people we can turn to for support during times of emotional distress. This is why looking at photos of loved ones can soothe our inner voice when we find ourselves ruminating.

**ETHAN KROSS** IS THE AUTHOR OF CHATTER: THE VOICE IN OUR HEAD, WHY IT MATTERS, AND HOW TO HARNESS IT.

# 4

#### **Exaggerate your fears.**

Take your worst-case scenario and use your imagination to amplify it. Make it ridiculous, maybe even embarrassing. Jeans feel a little tight? "You're disgusting. You failed again. Your partner is going to leave you and you'll end up alone and eating by the light of the refrigerator." You'll realize your critic is out of touch with reality and likely looking into a fun-house mirror.

ANDREA PATTEN IS THE AUTHOR OF THE INNER CRITIC ADVANTAGE: MAKING PEACE WITH THE NOISE IN YOUR HEAD.

## 5

#### Practice compassion.

Self-compassion is the medicine we all need. For example, maybe your inner observer says, "I got nothing done today! Why can't I get my act together?" A more helpful reframing might be, "My to-do list was impossibly long, and I did the best I could. Tomorrow I'll focus on the most important items." This kind of counterbalancing can retrain your brain so the critic takes a backseat.

**ROBYN CONLEY DOWNS** IS A RESEARCHER, A PODCAST HOST, AND THE AUTHOR OF *THE FEEL GOOD EFFECT.* 





**FAMILY** 

# The Power of Your Parents' Life Stories

There's the stuff you should talk about (wills, health care proxies, end-of-life preferences). But this is the stuff you'll want to talk about—the fun and heartfelt subjects that strengthen family bonds, reveal surprising memories, and foster understanding.

BY BETH WEINHOUSE

The conversations were intimate, and I understand my father a little better. We had a different dynamic afterward.

**IVAN SCHNEIDER**, a corporate copywriter in Seattle, grew up hearing stories from his father, Leon, about coming of age poor in New York City, hitchhiking as a teenager, and joining the merchant marine. Leon had traveled the world and even survived two torpedo attacks during World War II before settling down. He was 48 years old when Ivan was born, and when Ivan reached that age, he felt the need to learn even more about his 96-yearold father's life.

Ivan instigated a series of phone calls with his dad, who lived across the country. The long talks helped Ivan put his father's stories into perspective; he began to understand the motivations and emotions that went along with them. "It was a bunch of stories before, but it became a life story," Ivan says. "The conversations were an intimate experience, and I think I understand my father a little better. We had a different dynamic afterward, until his death from Covid last November."

The emotional payoff of talking to your parents about their past has nothing to do with whether they led extraordinary lives or ordinary ones. It's the talking itself that's powerful. "As you make sense of your parents' lives, you make more sense of your own," says Susan Newman, PhD, author of Nobody's Baby Now: Reinventing Your Adult Relationship with Your Mother and Father. "You can see what influenced them, and you can see how that may have influenced how they raised you, and even how you think."

It's easy to set up a great chat (see "3 Ways to Start the Conversation,"

right). You can work questions into regular phone calls or wait for an in-person family gathering, where perhaps the presence of jovial siblings and many open bottles of wine will get the conversation flowing. Or you can turn to an app like StoryCorps (see "Cool Family Story Tools," page 70) for help recording, saving, and sharing. Aim to ask open-ended (not yes-or-no) and specific questions. Here are some topics to explore with your parents, as well as sample questions to propel the conversation.

#### Their Childhoods

"This is a good starting place," Newman says. You can ask, "What was it like for you growing up?," and your parent can go off in many directions.

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

- What was your childhood bedroom like? Can you draw a picture of it?
- What are some silly things Grandma and Grandpa used to say to you? Would they sing any silly songs?
- What was your most memorable family vacation as a kid?
- Was money an issue when you were growing up, and if so, how were you aware of it?
- Did you get an allowance? What kind of household chores did you do?
- Who was your best friend? What were they like?
- Were there any big historical events you lived through that you remember?

#### **3 WAYS TO START** THE CONVERSATION

#### **GO ON A WALK OR DRIVE**

Stroll down a favorite road, or take a day trip somewhere scenic. The uninterrupted time together leaves space for thinking and talking.

**USE PROPS** Objects can spark memories and start discussions. Look through an old photo album. Play music you know your parents love. Find a newspaper front page (or reproduction) from when your parents were young and ask what it was like to live during that time.

#### DO A FAVORITE ACTIVITY

If you used to bake cookies with your mom, for example, try that again. Ask questions about the recipe: "Did your mother make this? How did she learn to cook?"

#### Their Romantic Relationships

It's hard to get a full picture of our parents as people without asking about their courtship, their experience as newlyweds, and even their relationships before meeting each other. Maybe you heard from an aunt or uncle that your dad was a heartbreaker or your mom was a big flirt. It's worth getting over the feeling that these questions are too prying. Trust that your parents won't tell you anything they don't want you to know. And if you sense discomfort, you can simply stop probing. "I wish I'd asked my dad questions like who his first love was," Newman says, wistfully.

Try relating the topic to your own situation—whether you're single, married, or going through a divorce. "You could say, 'It would be so helpful if you're comfortable sharing some of your experiences with me," says Maud Purcell, a psychotherapist and the founder of the Life Solution Center of Darien in Connecticut.

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

- Who was your first love? What happened?
- Tell me about your first kiss. Your first date?
- Did you ever have your heart broken?
- Is there a romantic relationship you regret? The one that got away?
- · What made you sure you found the right person to marry?
- Tell me about the day you two met. What kind of dates did you go on together?



#### Their Dreams and Ambitions

Your parents' childhood hopes can be illuminating. Find out if your parents had aspirations they weren't able to pursue—and why. "If they always wanted to be a doctor, maybe that tells you something about why you or your kids are so interested in science," Newman says.

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

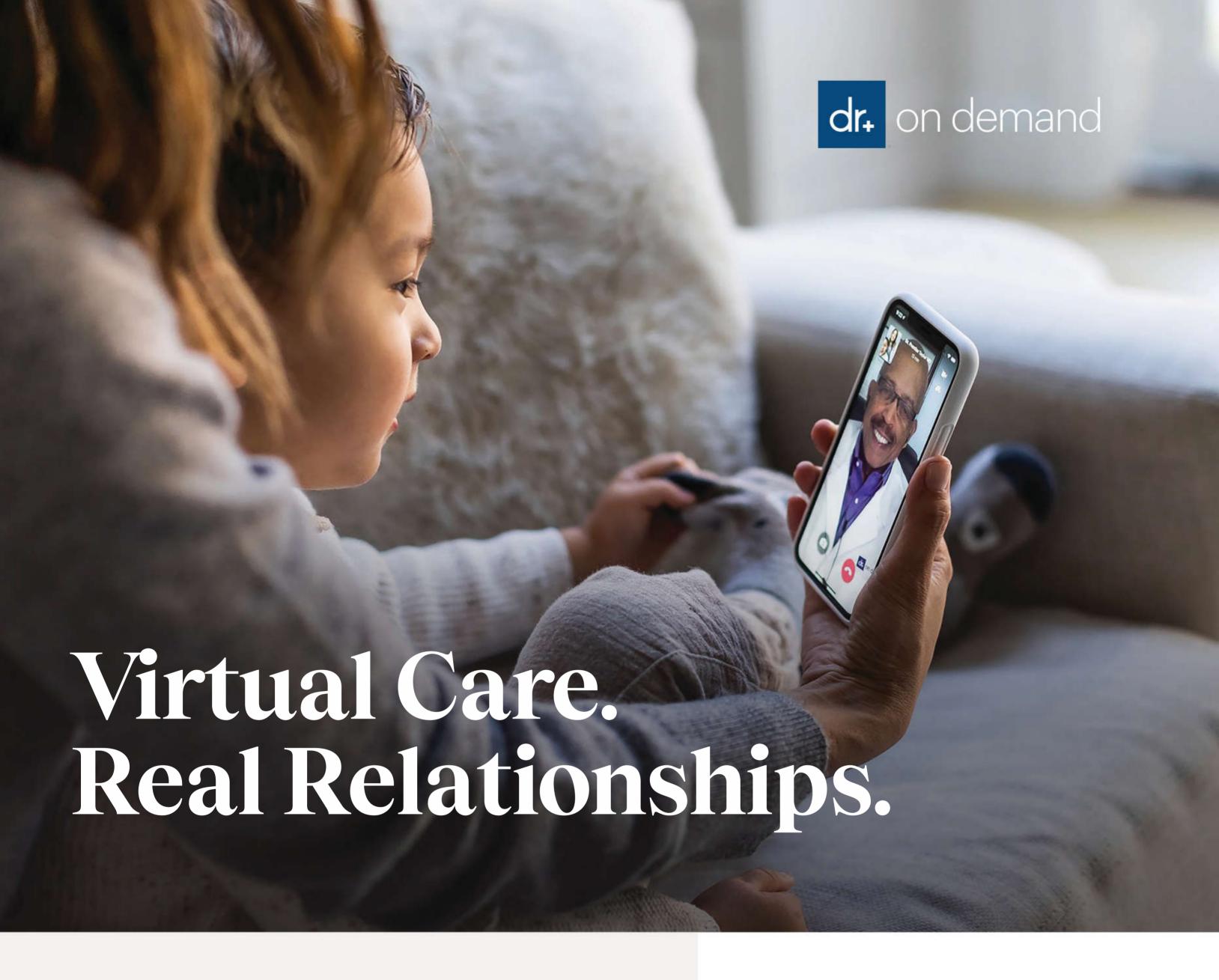
- What did you dream of being when you were a kid?
- What was your first job? Did you like it? How much were you paid?
- What was your best job ever, or who was your best boss? Your worst?
- For parents who were in the military: Did you enlist, or were you drafted? What were the living conditions like? Were you ever frightened? What did your time in the service teach you about the world?
- · What's the most memorable workday you've ever had?
- If you had to do it again, would you choose the same career?

#### **COOL FAMILY STORY TOOLS**

**STORYCORPS** This nonprofit is creating an oral history of personal lives. The app helps you record your parents' stories, which will be archived at the **Library of Congress. (Free;** storycorps.org)

**FAMILYSEARCH** The Memories section of this personal history research site (which also has an app) lets you upload photos, documents, and audio files, tag them by date and subject, and store them in shareable albums. (Free; familysearch.org)

**STORYWORTH** This site sends a weekly email prompt for your parent to respond to, and at the end of the year the stories are collected in a hardbound book. (\$99 per year; storyworth.com)



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# Modern Manners Advice for Your Social Quandaries

BY CATHERINE NEWMAN



My husband and I were recently on an airplane, and two women seated in front of us talked nonstop. Everyone around them was trying to rest or read, but they were laughing and talking loudly, and seemingly didn't care that they were being obnoxious. I was about to ask them to speak more softly, but my husband suggested I leave it alone. Next time, how should

M.S. ASKS...



#### HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

I handle this?

Hover your phone's camera here to submit your question for Catherine, or email her at modernmanners@realsimple.com.

Unless it's an overnight flight (and they dim the cabin lights), there's no rule that everyone needs to be quiet on a plane. Get in the habit of bringing noise-canceling headphones. Or ask for what you need, but take responsibility for the request, and don't make it scolding: "I'm so sorry to interrupt your fun, but I'm trying to rest, and I'd be so grateful if you could be a little quieter." They may have no idea that their high spirits are irritating and be happy to lower the volume. If they aren't, you could ask a flight attendant to speak to them-but try the friendly request first.

M.W. ASKS...

My cousin is having a black tie wedding, and no kids are allowed. We live out of town and don't want to get an overnight babysitter. Plus, we are on a tight budget and don't have tons of money to spend on renting a tux and gown. My mom thinks declining the invite would be rude and make her and my dad look bad. Am I in the wrong for deciding not to go?

You're not. The betrothed are always free to plan a dream event, such as a no-kids or destination wedding, that can be hard for guests to attend. But doing so signals that inclusivity—of parents, or older folks, or guests with financial constraints—is not their main priority. My advice to wedding planners: If you want everyone to be there, make sure everyone can be there. In this case, you can't solve the puzzle of an expensive and child-free event-a huge ask-and you don't need to feel bad about it. Tell your parents to have a wonderful time, write your cousin a lovely, loving note, and stay home with your kids.

#### S.B. ASKS...

We often babysit our friend's toddler. The last time he was over, he broke a glass tray I liked. When I told my friend, she looked apologetic—but never offered to replace or pay for it. If she'd offered, I would have declined, but the fact that she never did bothers me. (She is not struggling financially.) What are your thoughts?

I'm sorry about your tray, and I understand wishing that your friend had responded differently. Agreeing to babysit, though, means you're accountable for whatever happens on your watch. Luckily, the ransacking tot didn't get hurt, but imagine the other side of this mishap: Your friend might be wondering what exactly you were doing while her kid was playing near a potential hazard. In other words, it might have been your responsibility to take. "I'm so sorry," you might have said. "I didn't think he could reach that high, but I should have been watching him more closely." Accountability aside, it's never worth disrupting a relationship for the sake of an object. Keep the friend, and let the tray go.



It's never worth disrupting a relationship for the sake of an object.

#### M.K. ASKS...

Thanks to Covid, my wedding has been pushed back, and I've now seen the true colors of one of the women I asked to be in my bridal party two years ago. My fiancé and I will be in her wedding because we both adore her fiancé. Is it appropriate to ask her to not be in our wedding anymore? What's a tactful way to do this?

It's tricky to balance a single day—and the memories and photos it generates—against the rest of your life. My guess is that even if you gently bump her from the wedding party, you'll no longer have a relationship with her *or* her beloved fiancé. And that might be even more of a distraction or source of regret on your wedding day than her presence. If she's truly horrible—a bigot, say, or a bully—then go for it. Otherwise, try engaging with her about the issue: "I feel like we've drifted apart. Does it still feel good to you that we're in each other's wedding parties?" (Maybe she's also regretting her choice.) Or just let it be. And let the photos remind you that you valued the greater good of including her.

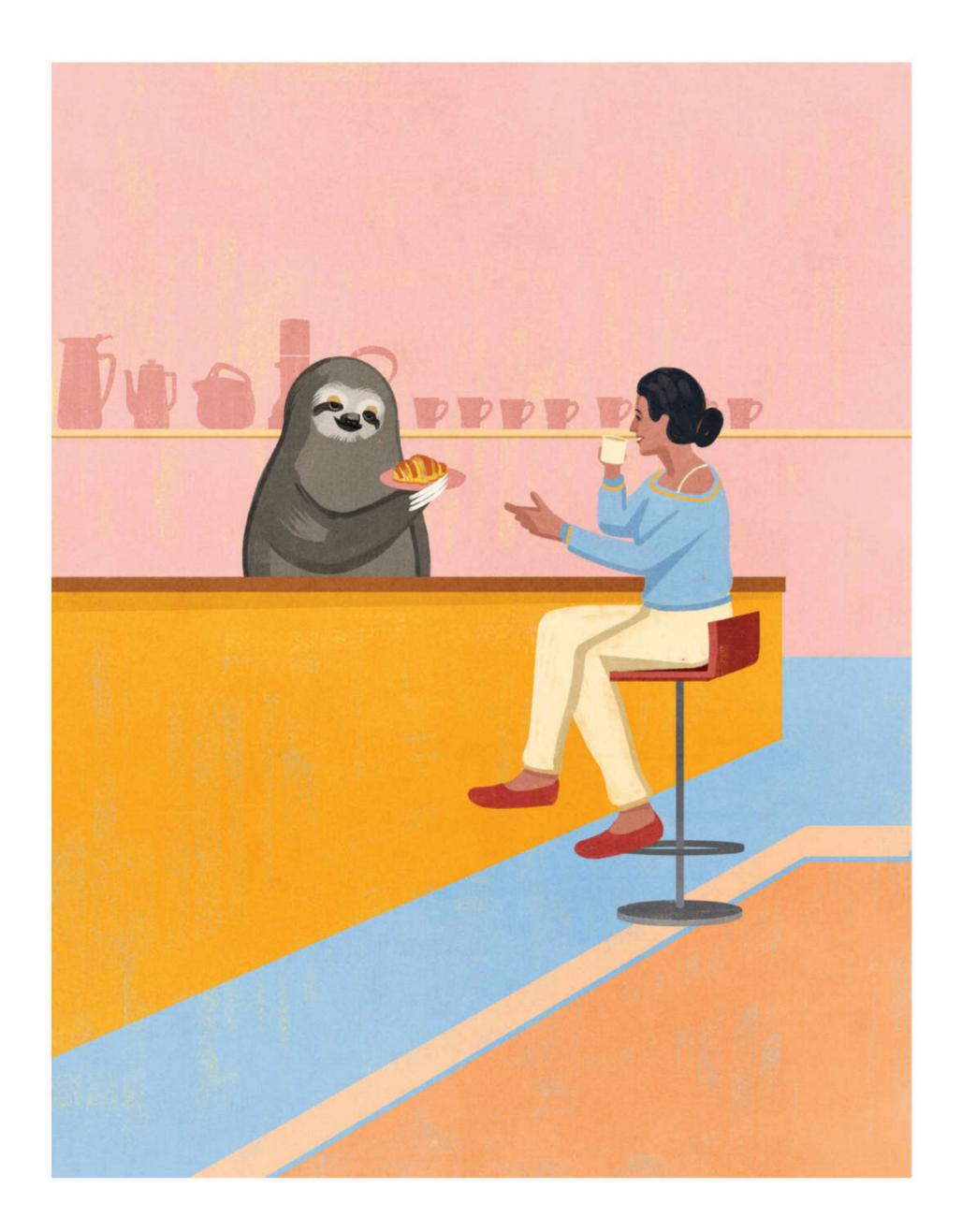
#### K.M. ASKS...

I like to unwind on the front porch of my townhome after a long day of meetings. I'm an introvert, so I recharge solo. However, a neighbor always comes out to talk, even if I have headphones on or am reading. She doesn't pick up on cues when I try to end the conversation. I know she's lonely, but how do I encourage her to respect my space?

You are doing everything you can to politely signal your wish to be alone, so she either can't understand social cuesor chooses to ignore them. As such, she may be used to people setting robust boundaries, and she'll perhaps be less sensitive about it than you fear. Explain that you're an introvert, and try compassionate transparency: "Forgive me, but I spend all day in conversation, and I really crave some time to myself at the end of it." Wearing headphones is the universal sign for "Don't talk to me," so you might want to illuminate this for her: "When I have my headphones on, I'm trying to keep to myself." And whenever you've got it in you, smile, remove your headphones, and lend her lonely self an ear.

#### ABOUT CATHERINE

The author of How to Be a Person:
65 Hugely Useful, Super-Important
Skills to Learn Before You're Grown Up,
Catherine Newman has shared her
wisdom on matters ranging from
family and friends to happiness and
pickling in numerous publications.
She gets advice from her husband and
two opinionated, largely grown
children in Amherst, Massachusetts.



THE HELPFUL MIND

## Slow Body, Clear Head

Discover the perks of moving with intention.

BY STEPH FAIRYINGTON

**SLOWING DOWN** has helped me endure the stress of these fraught pandemic times: I actually feel happier and healthier when I move my body more slowly.

It wasn't always this way. I began to question my fast-lane approach to life in the ladies' room last year. In the interest of getting to a meeting on time, I honestly considered curtailing a seemingly endless pee session, going just enough to stave off a full bladder. This madness reflected my MO: I'd find all sorts of ways to quicken my pace—then lose it when anything impeded my swiftness. Full-throttle and frenzied, I was prone to error, miscommunication, insensitivity, and anger.

One hectic morning, I opened a box of cereal with such fast fury that I tore the flaps, sending me into a whirl of rage. My spouse, who could out-Zen a Zen master, quietly poured herself a portion from the broken box and eyed me with caution. In that moment, I realized I needed to slow down—literally, move more slowly—to see how I'd feel and who I might become when I was no longer hustling.

I decided to spend an entire day moving with slow deliberation. Instead of yanking back the shower curtain, I pulled it open calmly, and I actually saw the different shapes of water stains

## When I feel myself starting to combust, I activate my slo-mo setting and recalibrate.

on its interior. Instead of barking frantic orders at my 4-year-old, I lingered with her in makebelieve. Instead of blasting highenergy tunes on my walk to the subway, I listened to my shoes hitting the pavement.

The day's accumulation of slow moments resulted in a more serene—and happier—disposition. Slackening my pace quieted my erratic thoughts and connected me to the sensual pleasure in everyday acts, like holding a newspaper or folding (and smelling) fresh laundry.

Moving slowly may offer tangible rewards. Meditation, numerous studies show, improves mood and focus and helps reduce anger, anxiety, and depression. People who practice tai chi-slow, conscious movement combined with meditative deep breathingenjoy increased self-esteem and lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, a meta-analysis of 40 studies found. "Slower movement with meditation can lead to a tranquil state that promotes health," says Chenchen Wang, MD, who heads the Center for Complementary and Integrative Medicine at Tufts Medical Center in Boston.

To reap these benefits, make slowness a daily habit. "It would have to be a sustained, intentional practice, accompanied by mindfulness—moment-to-moment nonjudgmental awareness," says Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, founder of the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Calmly gliding through life in tempo with snails might feel impossible to sustain. But when I feel myself starting to combust, I activate my slo-mo setting and recalibrate. Read on for how I create slow moments in my day.

#### Linger in Bed

Heeding the suggestion of Kabat-Zinn, I make sure I'm "up" before I get up in the morning. "Spend a few moments intentionally lying on your back and feeling your breath move," he says. "When you drop into what you are experiencing in that moment, you're awake—and that's what mindfulness is." The simplicity of this ritual is so soothing, I look forward to waking up.

#### **Wakefully Bathe**

In the shower, the voice in my head shrieks ("You're late!"). I often can't even remember whether I shampooed my hair. "Anchor yourself in the present—check if you're in the shower when you're in the shower," Kabat-Zinn says. When my focus drifts, I bring it back by saying, "Right now," and I turn my attention to the feeling of the warm water and soap suds on my body.

#### **Drop Your Jaw**

If I feel my body tensing up, I relax my jaw, tongue, and larynx, which helps catalyze calm, says Boris Dubrovsky, PhD, a psychologist at **NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn** Methodist Hospital. "When we have racing, anxious thoughts, we tend to subvocalize, creating a constant internal monologue that engages all these muscles even without speech production," he explains. "Relaxing those muscles disrupts the feedback loop, and your thoughts stop midair." Several times a day, whenever I notice my jaw clenching, I open my mouth wide and let my lax tongue hang out for 30 to 60 seconds.

#### **Sway Like a Tree**

When a stress cramp starts throbbing, I try this nature-inspired move by Scott Rogers, author of *The Elements of Mindfulness*. I stand up straight but relaxed and slowly bring my arms out like branches to form a T. I wiggle my fingers like leaves in the wind, then deeply inhale as I raise my arms, or "branches," into a Y. I sway side to side, then exhale as I bring my arms down. This mini meditation helps me reset at a slower pace.

#### FIRST PERSON

#### FRIENDSHIP IN BLACK AND WHITE

We all spend so much time with people who are just like us—who shop at the same stores, follow the same celebrities and politicians. But *Nancy Johnson* found the joy in stepping outside the echo chamber.



**E HAVE OUR OWN** "couple name" that her husband bestowed upon us: #Jucy—a mash-up of Julie and Nancy. Julie and I first met at a writing retreat, where we politely introduced ourselves,

but nothing more. The stalking came months later, when we peeked at each other's writing in an online workshop. Neither of us had any idea we were being watched and admired. Squealing when she heard our backstory, Bronte, Julie's 22-year-old daughter, proclaimed that her mom and I had had a bona fide meet-cute.

Our friendship sneaked up on me. In my mid-40s, I already had close friends, who were like sisters to me; I wasn't looking to make new ones. Besides, Julie and I couldn't have been more different. She's a vegetarian, and I crave a good steak. She loves getting her hands dirty on the farm, while I prefer city life. She's married with four children, and I'm single with none. The most obvious difference is that I'm Black and she's white.

I've never been quick to make friends, regardless of race. Growing up, I was the tall, awkward girl with the huge Afro and Coke-bottle glasses. I still remember what it felt like to stand at the edge of the playground, watching the other girls laugh and jump double Dutch, wishing for the connections they made easily.

For years, a real friendship with someone white seemed unimaginable to me. On the day of the O.J. Simpson verdict, a white acquaintance I'll call Abigail was visiting my home. I'd never expressed my views on his innocence or guilt, but I knew the case had deeply divided America along racial lines. When Simpson's attorney, Johnnie Cochran, appeared on TV giving his analysis after the verdict, Abigail became irritated and enraged. She was entitled to her views on the case, but then she insisted I change the channel. Instead, I kicked her out of my apartment, and we never spoke again.

For close to four years, I worked as a TV news reporter in Madison, Wisconsin, and I still carry the bruises from being called the N-word on the job. When my career took me to Florida, someone scrawled that ugly word on the drywall of my home as it was being built (I didn't go through with the purchase). Life has taught me to be wary, to protect myself from people who might devalue and hurt me. So white people were not at the top of my "let's be friends" list.



The author (right) and Julie went from being mutual secret admirers to BFFs.

In the mostly Black, middle-class neighborhood where I grew up, on Chicago's South Side, there were usually only a handful of white kids in my classes, if any. White flight had sent many families to the suburbs in the '70s and '80s.

It wasn't until I went to a predominantly white prep school, and then Northwestern University, that everything flipped, and I was suddenly in the minority. That old, familiar feeling of being an outsider resurfaced. In college, the Black students sat together in the dorm cafeteria, and it reassured me to have that sense of community. Even so, the local paper profiled us for the ridiculous notion that we were segregating ourselves, neglecting to mention that the white and Asian American students had formed their own homogeneous clusters too.

The reality for many of us is that we spend most of our quality time with people who are most like us. We live in the same neighborhoods and shop at the same stores. We socialize with the same people and follow the same celebrities and politicians online. We often think and sound alike. I know firsthand that it's easier, less risky, to stick with the people who look like me and mirror what I already believe about the world.

Julie and I didn't talk about race in the beginning. I don't think we intentionally avoided it, but we focused on books and writing. We emailed for months before talking on the phone. You can't orchestrate relationships. As a farmer, Julie has taught me about the planting season for vegetables. Same thing with friendship—it has its growing season, and you can't rush it. When a magazine named us both winners of a national writing contest, I instinctively dialed Julie's number, and we screamed in delight at our collective good fortune. That was in 2016, and we haven't stopped talking.

We've been through a lot together, mainly the ups and downs of publishing our books. With her urgently red hair and I know she's plotting something. Long before either of us landed book deals, Julie was lucky enough to be seated next to an editor from a major publishing house at a literary luncheon. She spent the entire hour talking up my book, an act of generosity the editor said she'd never witnessed before.

Little by little, I was getting to know Julie's big heart. Over many conversations, I learned that she cares deeply about the plight of refugees and the interdependence of people and the planet. We've talked about her friendships with other Black people (yes, plural). I know that I'm not her token Black friend, and that she believed Black lives mattered well before the slogan went from subversive to cool.

When I attended a retreat for Black writers in Taos, New Mexico, one summer, I walked through the woods to get to class, and the organizers told us to be on the lookout for snakes, bears, and mountain lions. After my initial freak-out, I settled into the quiet beauty of the forest. A few days in, I phoned Julie from the retreat to say, "I wish you were Black! You'd love it here."

Still, Julie's not Black, and it's impossible for her to fully understand my experience. Slipping in and out of Black and white spaces every day tires me out; I don't consciously codeswitch, but I'm convinced that maintaining this double identity has eroded parts of me over time. White women don't bear that burden. The world doesn't require them to be figurative shape-shifters just to survive.

Once, at the end of a fancy party, Julie and I were jabbering about the people we'd met, being silly, even a little petty, because that's just who we are. We stepped out of the host's beautiful home into drizzling rain. My first instinct was to call a cab to take us to our hotel, and I said so. Or maybe I suggested it in a pleading tone. But Julie was already a few paces ahead of me, bouncing with her long, straight hair swinging against her jacket. "It's only a short walk," she said. Grudgingly, I followed her. I didn't mind stepping into a few puddles, but I could feel each strand of my hair shrinking in rebellion. Julie didn't understand the adversarial relationship between relaxed Black hair and rain, and I didn't explain. Instead, I silently fumed.



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Honesty in the best friendships is hard, especially when it comes to matters of race, and the vulnerability required still scares me sometimes. When we saw racially offensive social media posts by an organization we belonged to, we were both offended and joined forces in opposition. Julie had my back. Yet while we stood united, it didn't feel equal. I was sure that the leaders of the organization had taken her complaint more seriously than mine, that her whiteness legitimized our grievance. When I told Julie this, she shrugged it off and said, "No, that's impossible. No one would believe me over you." I didn't press the issue. Instead, I second-guessed myself. Was I imagining it? Maybe. Am I highly sensitive about race? Of course I am. But I also know that internalized oppression has taught me to overlook microaggressions, to persuade myself that I'm overreacting to racial slights.

About a year later, I reminded Julie of our conversation. This time, she said, "I thought I was validating you, because it didn't seem logical that anyone would trust me over you on race. But instead I was silencing you." She understood. And so did I. My friend who saves bugs instead of stomping

on them almost always assumes good intentions. It occurred to me that it didn't really matter anymore who'd been taken more seriously. What was most important was that Julie truly heard me once I found the courage to speak my truth.

Even with friends, it's never easy to say the hard things.

Trust is a muscle we build every time we use it. When we do, our boundaries expand. I welcome genuine interest in who I am as a Black woman, as long as I'm not treated as a curiosity, a specimen to be examined under the microscope. (You can ask about my hair; just don't touch it.) Friendship is sort of like how I climbed trees as a kid. I rarely swung from the high branches, because I didn't trust them to hold me. I avoided falling, but I also missed out on seeing the splendor of the world from up high. Julie will never know what it's like to be Black, but she's my high branch. And if I keep summoning the courage to be honest and swing higher, I know she'll see me—all of me—and that matters. ■



ABOUT THE AUTHOR Nancy Johnson's debut novel, The Kindest Lie, will be published February 2.









## Shira Gill

in Berkeley,
California, triples
as an office and
a backdrop for her
online organizing
classes. The built-in
cabinet holds items
she needs for work
and family time.

Edit ruthlessly. Shira pared down her hosting supplies to the most she'd use for the largest party she throws—her Hanukkah open house.

2 Labeled bins corral small items, like candles, napkins, and party decor. (Try Medium Nordic Storage Baskets, \$9 each; containerstore.com.)

It's not a waste of time to put stuff away at night, even if you'll just take it out tomorrow. Shira's family "shuts off" at 6 p.m. by stashing work in the cabinet and closing the doors.





## Nikki Boyd



For the author of Beautifully Organized, cabinet drawers are the foundation of her space-saving kitchen in Charleston, South Carolina.

Nikki aims for such a clear organizing system that anyone can locate what they need—even if they don't live in her home.

Always use drawer dividers. ✓ Nikki likes the Expandable Bamboo Cutlery Organizer (\$30; bedbathandbeyond .com). Leaving a drawer undivided, she says, "is like hanging a welcome sign for clutter."

Teatime is the highlight of Nikki's morning, so she devoted an entire drawer to her collection. "I give prime real estate to things that encourage me to live a better life," she says.







## Monica Leed



With the help of a closet system, a guest room corner is an efficient (and pretty!) home office for the Los Angeles-based owner of Simply Spaced.

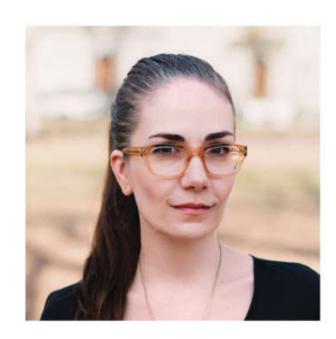
A few decorative accents make a modular closet system (like California Closets or Elfa) cute enough to live in the open. Monica's backdrop of colorful wallpaper draws focus from the Elfa brackets, while clothcovered boxes hide paperwork and supplies.

2 Upgrade the vibe with things that spark a smile. (The point of life is not PowerPoint.) Monica keeps personal photos and plants in view. "It makes work fun and intentional," she says.

Monica sorts paperwork into categories: Active papers (her to-do and to-file items) are stored in open trays; accessible files (things she refers to regularly) go in magazine files; archival items, like taxes, are kept elsewhere.

### Laura Cattano

Thanks to styling and organizing, this New Yorker doesn't mind having her open closet on full view in her small apartment.



Arrange clothing by color, from light to dark. In each color group, hang items from lightweight to heavy. "This way, nothing gets lost, and you can see everything within a hue," Laura says.

2 Consider a limited palette.
Laura's wardrobe is in a
narrow range of colors, which
saves her time when getting
dressed because almost all
the pieces go together.

Set up your closet so you can easily access the garments you need to make an outfit. Use open shelf space for sweaters and jeans; save drawers for first layers, like tights, underwear, and loungewear. And hang clothes so the fronts of the garments face where you usually stand—not away from you.



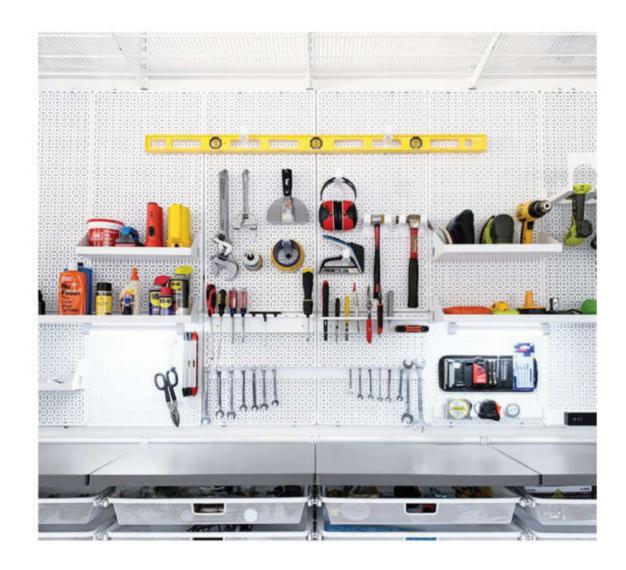
BOUTIQUE ARRANGEMENT

In lieu of a jewelry box,
Laura displays her
baubles on a marble tray.
She places them in
pretty boxes and bowls,
much like her
favorite shops do.



PREVIOUS SPREAD: KITCHEN BY CHRISTOPHER SHANE; NIKKI BOYD HEADSHOT BY ABBY MURPHY; OFFICE BY MONICA LEED; MONICA LEED HEADSHOT BY AMANDA PROUDFIT. THIS PAGE: CLOSET BY LAURA CATTANO; HEADSHOT BY JEREMY BALDERSON

## And for Those Other Challenging Corners



#### **GARAGE**

Samatha Pregenzer, founder of Simply Organized, used two storage systems in her Bay Area garage: pegboard-like metal panels, which offer "a place for every tool," and wall-mounted drawers below, for things like car-washing supplies and vacuum attachments.

OMNIPANEL, \$32; OMNIWALLUSA.COM



#### **LAUNDRY ROOM**

Katrina Teeple, Dallas-based founder of Operation Organization, buys large jugs of detergent to decant into glass bottles. She stashes the bottles and stain removers in a basket on the counter for quick access.

BORMIOLI ROCCO SWING BOTTLE, \$6; SURLATABLE.COM



#### **LINEN CLOSET**

Shira Gill keeps just two towels per family member (plus a guest set) and two sets of sheets per bed. Shelf dividers prevent items from migrating, and bins hold less-used supplies, like painkillers and bandages.

CLEAR SHELF DIVIDER, \$11; CONTAINERSTORE.COM



#### **PANTRY**

Meggie Mangione, CEO of Organized Life Design in Houston, pours grains and dry goods into clear, airtight containers so she can see how much she has on hand.

POP CONTAINERS, FROM \$18; OXO.COM





#### **Mixed Grains Bowl with Beet-Ginger Dressing**

ACTIVE TIME 20 MINUTES TOTAL TIME 1 HOUR, 20 MINUTES SERVES 4

- 1/2 cup red rice or short-grain brown rice
- 1/2 cup dried brown lentils, rinsed
- 1/2 cup rainbow quinoa
- 21/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1/4 cup olive oil, divided, plus more for serving

- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup plain whole-milk kefir
- 1 8.8-oz. pkg. steamed beets (such as Love Beets), chopped  $(1\frac{3}{4} \text{ cups})$
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger (from a 1-in. piece)
- 2 avocados, halved, pitted, and peeled
- 1 small bulb fennel, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup hemp seeds Baby greens, flaky sea salt, and crushed red pepper, for serving

PLACE 3½ cups water, rice, and 1 teaspoon kosher salt in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer for 25 minutes. Stir in lentils; cover and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in quinoa; cover and cook until grains are tender and all water is absorbed, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove lid, cover pan with a clean dish towel, and replace lid. Let stand for 10 minutes. Spread grains on a rimmed baking sheet and let cool for 10 minutes. Toss grains with 3 tablespoons oil and 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt on baking sheet. (Grains can be made up to 3 days ahead; store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.)

**MEANWHILE**, place kefir, beets, lemon juice, ginger, and remaining 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt and 1 tablespoon oil in a blender. Process until smooth, about 30 seconds.

**SPOON** beet mixture on 1 side of each plate and spread with back of a spoon into a half-moon shape. Top with grains mixture, avocado, fennel, hemp seeds, and baby greens. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt and crushed red pepper. Drizzle with oil.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Blitz beets with unsweetened canned coconut milk instead of kefir.



The heartbeet of this

bowl is the vibrant,

earthy dressing.

Trust us: You'll want

to make extra to

keep in the fridge.



## Soy-Simmered Squash with Miso Hummus

ACTIVE TIME **35 MINUTES**TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR**SERVES **4** 

- 1 small green kabocha squash or large acorn squash (about 3 lb.)
- 2 cups unsalted vegetable broth
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup low-sodium soy sauce
- 3 Tbsp. mirin (rice cooking wine)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. yellow miso
- 1 10-oz. container hummus
- 4 large eggs
  Sliced scallions and
  shichimi togarashi or
  crushed red pepper,
  for serving

**cut** squash in half lengthwise through stem; scoop out and discard seeds. Cut squash into 1½-to-2-inch wedges. Stir broth, soy sauce, and mirin in a bowl.

HEAT 1 tablespoon oil in a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven over medium-high. Add half of squash wedges, flesh side down; cook, flipping once, until golden brown on both sides, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a

Shichimi togarashi is a bright Japanese spice blend with chiles and sesame seeds. No need to peel these winter squashes.
The skin is edible and softens when cooked.

large plate. Repeat with remaining 1 tablespoon oil and squash. Remove pot from heat.

arrange squash wedges, skin side down and standing upright, in pot (it's OK if some wedges lean on each other). Season with salt and pour in broth mixture. Return pot to burner over medium-high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, partially covered, until squash is tender when pierced with a fork and liquid has reduced and slightly thickened, 25 to 30 minutes.

**MEANWHILE,** fill a medium saucepan with water and bring to a boil over high. Carefully add eggs.
Reduce heat to medium; cook eggs over a gentle boil, 6 minutes for a runnier yolk or 7 minutes for a jammier yolk. Remove eggs, run under cold water, and peel.

LADLE 2 tablespoons cooking liquid from squash mixture into a medium bowl. Add miso and stir until smooth. Add hummus and stir until incorporated.

spread hummus mixture over centers of plates; top with squash wedges. Cut eggs in half and serve with squash. Drizzle some cooking liquid on top. Sprinkle with scallions and shichimi togarashi.

**MAKE IT VEGAN:** Skip the eggs and scatter chunks of silken tofu on top.

#### Glazed Brussels Sprouts on Olive-Oil-Fried Bread

ACTIVE TIME 45 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

- 5 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1 1-lb. ciabatta loaf (12 by 7 in.), split horizontally
- 2 cloves garlic
- 11/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
  - 1 lb. fresh Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 1/2 cup pomegranate juice
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 1-lb. container whole-milk ricotta cheese
- 3/4 cup toasted, chopped hazelnuts Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley and freshly ground black pepper, for serving

PREHEAT oven to 225°F. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large cast-iron or other heavy skillet over medium. (Trim bread to fit skillet if necessary.) Place 1 bread half, cut side down, in skillet. Fry, occasionally pressing down middle with a spatula, until golden, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer bread, cut side up, to a baking sheet. Repeat with 1 tablespoon oil and remaining bread half. Remove skillet from heat. Rub cut sides of bread generously with garlic; season with ½ teaspoon salt. Transfer baking sheet to oven to keep bread warm.

ADD remaining 2 tablespoons oil to skillet over medium. Carefully add Brussels sprouts, mostly cut side down, and cook, undisturbed, until golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and toss. Cook, undisturbed, until golden in parts, 4 to 5 minutes. Add pomegranate juice, vinegar, and ½ teaspoon salt; stir to coat. Bring to a simmer over medium. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, stirring often, until Brussels sprouts are tender and liquid reduces to a glaze, 15 to 18 minutes.

**STIR** ricotta and remaining <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Spread over cut sides of bread. Top with Brussels sprouts, hazelnuts, parsley, and several grinds of pepper. Cut each bread half into 4 pieces.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Prepare dairy-free cashew "ricotta." Soak 2 cups raw cashews in very hot water in a heatproof bowl for 30 minutes; drain. Blend cashews with 3 Tbsp. unsweetened nondairy creamer, 2 Tbsp. lemon juice, 2 Tbsp. nutritional yeast, 1 tsp. kosher salt, and 1/4 cup water until smooth.

Tofu, but make it crispy.
Broiling this go-to soy protein guarantees an irresistible exterior. Match it with fresh herbs, tangy apricots, and creamy chickpeas for a satisfying supper.

#### Lemon-Pepper Tofu with Apricot-Chickpea Salsa

ACTIVE TIME 15 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME 50 MINUTES
SERVES 4

- 1 14-oz. pkg. extra-firm tofu, drained
- 2 tsp. lemon zest plus 2 Tbsp. fresh juice (from 1 lemon)
- 2 tsp. honey
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup plus 2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 11/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 cup dried apricots, chopped
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups packed fresh cilantro leaves (from 1 bunch), finely chopped
- ¹/₃ cup jarred nonpareil capers, drained and finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, grated (preferably on a Microplane)
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper
- 1 15.5-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup plain couscous

**GENTLY** press tofu between paper towels to absorb liquid. Slice tofu lengthwise into 4 planks. Cut planks diagonally in half to total 8 pieces. Arrange in an even layer in a large baking dish.

**WHISK** lemon juice, honey, black pepper, 2 tablespoons oil, and ½ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Pour mixture over tofu; turn tofu to coat. Wipe bowl clean. Add apricots and vinegar to bowl and stir to combine. Let tofu and apricots stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.



**MEANWHILE,** stir cilantro, capers, garlic, and crushed red pepper in a medium bowl. Stir in chickpeas, lemon zest, ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ½ cup oil.

**BRING** 1 cup water to a boil in a small saucepan over high. Add couscous and ½ teaspoon salt; stir, cover, and remove from heat. Let stand for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork.

preheat oven to broil with rack 6 inches from heat. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil. Remove tofu from marinade and arrange in an even layer on baking sheet (reserve marinade in baking dish). Season tofu evenly on both sides with remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt.

Broil until browned around edges, about 10 minutes. Brush tofu with some reserved marinade and flip; brush top sides with marinade. Return to oven. Broil until tofu is browned around edges, 6 to 8 minutes.

**STIR** apricots and any vinegar left in bowl into cilantro-chickpea mixture. Spread couscous on a platter and top with tofu. Dollop with apricotchickpea salsa.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Use pure maple syrup in the marinade instead of honey (which isn't considered vegan, since it's a product of bees).



#### **Crispy Mushroom Reuben Sandwiches**

ACTIVE TIME 25 MINUTES TOTAL TIME 40 MINUTES SERVES 4

- 12 oz. mixed sliced fresh mushrooms, such as oyster, cremini, and shiitake (about 7 cups)
- 1/4 cup olive oil, divided
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 2½ tsp. prepared horseradish
- 1/2 tsp. soy sauce
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup plus 3 Tbsp. mayonnaise, divided
- 8 slices Jewish rye bread
- 8 slices Swiss or provolone cheese (about 6 oz.)
- 1 cup drained sauerkraut Persian (mini) cucumbers, halved lengthwise, for serving

**PREHEAT** oven to 425°F with racks in upper and lower thirds. Divide mushrooms between 2 rimmed baking sheets. On each baking sheet, drizzle mushrooms with 2 tablespoons oil

and season with 1/4 teaspoon salt; toss to coat. Spread mushrooms in an even layer. Roast, rotating baking sheets halfway through, until mushrooms are golden and crispy in parts, 18 to 20 minutes.

**MEANWHILE**, stir tomato paste, horseradish, soy sauce, 1/2 cup mayonnaise, and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt in a bowl until smooth.

**SPREAD** 1 side of each bread slice with remaining 3 tablespoons mayonnaise. Flip and spread other sides of bread with tomato paste mixture (about 1 tablespoon per slice). Top each of 4 slices with 1 cheese slice. about 1/3 cup mushrooms, and 1/4 cup sauerkraut. Top with remaining 4 cheese slices and 4 bread slices, mayonnaise sides facing up.

**HEAT** a large nonstick skillet over medium. Cook sandwiches in 2 batches, pressing gently with a spatula, until bread is golden and cheese is melted, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Serve with cucumbers.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Opt for eggless mayonnaise and dairy-free cheese. We love Follow Your Heart's melty **Provolone Style Slices.** 

Mushroom magic lives here. A medley of these fun guys crisps up in the oven to bring big flavor, comfort-food vibes, and energy-boosting B vitamins to a sandwich classic.

#### Whole Roasted Cauliflower with Grapes and Feta

ACTIVE TIME 25 MINUTES TOTAL TIME 1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES SERVES 4

- 1 medium head cauliflower (about  $2^{1/2}$  lb.)
- 1 shallot, finely chopped (about 1/3 cup)
- 2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup olive oil, divided
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided, plus more for water
- 1 1-lb. block feta cheese, drained and patted dry
- 1 lb. seedless red or black grapes (3 cups) Fresh oregano leaves, roughly chopped, for serving

BRING a large, tall pot of generously salted water to a boil over high. Trim cauliflower stem so head can stand upright on its own. Gently lower cauliflower into pot, standing upright. Cook, stirring occasionally, until soft when gently pierced with a fork, 10 to 12 minutes.

**MEANWHILE**, preheat oven to 500°F with rack in upper third. Stir shallot and vinegar in a small bowl.

**GENTLY** remove cauliflower from water with a largehandled strainer, a spider, or 2 slotted spoons; transfer to a plate. Pat with paper towels to absorb any excess water. Let cool for 10 minutes. Pat dry again, then transfer to a baking sheet.

**BRUSH** cauliflower all over with 1 tablespoon oil and season with 1/2 teaspoon salt. Roast until browned in parts, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, cut feta into 12 (1/2 inch thick) slices.

ADD grapes to baking sheet with cauliflower. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil. Return to oven and roast for 10 minutes. Brush feta on both sides with 1 tablespoon oil; add to baking sheet. Return to oven and roast until feta forms a golden crust, cauliflower is golden brown all over, and grapes have softened, 10 to 12 minutes.

**BRUSH** cauliflower all over with remaining 1 tablespoon oil and season with remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt. Transfer cauliflower, grapes, and feta to a platter. Drizzle with shallot mixture. Top with oregano.

MAKE IT VEGAN: No feta, no problem. Cook plantbased sausage right on the baking sheet. Voilà a complete meal.







WE UNCOVERED 24 EASY,
JOYFUL WAYS TO WORK
FITNESS INTO YOUR LIFE—NO
GYM MEMBERSHIP OR
EXERCISE FADS REQUIRED.

BY MICHELE STANTEN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ASIA PIETRZYK

**YOU'RE UP BEFORE THE SUN RISES** with every intention of hopping onto your spin bike. Then you putter around, do everything *but* ride, run out of time, and skip it. Or you do get on the bike but pedal half-heartedly as you respond to email on your phone, and then you beat yourself up for not being more motivated. We are giving you permission to stop sabotaging yourself. If long, hard workouts don't suit you, find exercise opportunities throughout your day instead.

The benefits are cumulative: You don't have to push yourself and get all sweaty to boost your mood, strengthen your bones, lower your risk of heart disease, and more. Walking for three 10-minute bouts per day, for example, can deliver benefits like lower blood pressure. "Everything

counts," says Michelle Segar, PhD, MPH, author of No Sweat: How the Simple Science of Motivation Can Bring You a Lifetime of Fitness. "Research shows that any movement is better than none." With an open, flexible fitness mindset, you're likely to move more—and more consistently—according to researchers at Kansas State University.

Here are two dozen ideas for slipping physical activity into your day, whether you're at home, running errands, or hanging out with friends and family.

#### AT HOME

#### Bounce while you watch Netflix.

Instead of sinking into the couch, plop onto an inflatable exercise ball. (If you're five feet eight or shorter, get the 55-centimeter size; if you're taller, go for the 65-centimeter ball.) Bouncing up and down will increase blood flow to your legs. Balance with one foot off the floor for a core challenge. Or roll down and drape yourself over the ball to stretch.

Move your hips. Beth Frates, MD, a lifestyle medicine specialist at Harvard Medical School, uses a Hula-Hoop in her home and backyard, and she's even gotten colleagues to hoop it up during her wellness workshops. "A 74-year-old patient started and challenged me to join," says Frates, who couldn't say no, since she always recommends trying new things. "That was eight years ago, and I still do it. It's fun, and the brain loves novelty." You can use a plastic Hula-Hoop from a dollar store like Frates does, or try a padded, weighted version.



**Do a coffee break circuit.** Knock out 10 push-ups and 10 squats while your coffee brews.

Or a laundry room circuit. Susan Moses, 53, of Sherman Oaks, California, has turned loading the washer into a workout. Rather than fill a basket with clothes, she carries what she can without a basket, making several trips up and down the stairs. She does the same after the load finishes, bringing wet clothes upstairs to hang dry. "Carrying wet jeans is like carrying a couple of one-pound weights," she says.

#### Create a makeshift toning zone.

Hang a resistance band in the bathroom, kitchen, or den. Every time you pass by, do a quick set—rows, chest presses, biceps curls, triceps extensions, lat pull-downs (look up moves at acefitness.org). By the end of the day, you could complete a total-body workout. Moses likes to keep a set of dumbbells in the corner of her bedroom. "If I have 15 minutes before I have to pick up my daughter from school, I'll lift some weights," she says.

## Climbing stairs three times a week can boost cardiovascular fitness, according to a six-week study.

Stream popular workouts. Donna Cave, 64, of Long Island, New York, discovered on-demand workouts by accident, and now she's hooked. "It fits my schedule better than trying to get to a class or gym," she says. "Some nights I get home from work pretty late. Being in my living room means I can start heating up dinner while I work out." Try Daily Burn, Beachbody, Fitness Blender, or Peloton Digital (no bike required).

#### Step in place during commercials.

During a one-hour TV show, people who did this racked up 25 minutes of physical activity and burned about 150 calories, according to a University of Tennessee study. Step on and off a low bench to burn even more calories and tone your glutes and legs. Streaming without commercials? Set a timer and hop up every 10 minutes.

End your day with yoga. Lie on your back on the floor. Extend your arms to the sides and bring your knees in toward your chest. Slowly lower your knees toward the floor on the right, keeping your shoulders flat. Slowly look to the left. Hold for three to five breaths, feeling the stretch in your lower back, hips, and chest. Repeat on the opposite side. Do two more times on each side. For an extra-relaxing vibe, do this move on your bed.



Sara always hated running. "It hurts my legs. It's boring. And I could never get that runner's high." She decided to stop torturing herself and find an easy at-home workout. One day, she pulled out the mini trampoline she'd bought when her kids were little, found a rebounding class online, and started jumping: high knees, tuck jumps, side-to-side hops, even some jogging. "When I'd run and get a side stitch, I'd stop, but on the trampoline I can push through," she says. She also uses the trampoline throughout the day for quick pick-me-ups. "I'll put on a fast song and jump for five minutes," she says. "Afterward, I feel amazing, and it clears my head."

#### **OUT AND ABOUT**

Climb 60 stairs (three to five flights). Repeat twice more during the day. Hitting the stairs like this just three times a week can boost cardio fitness, according to a six-week Canadian study.

#### Seek out movement moments.

Moses could leave mail outside her door to be picked up, but she hoofs it half a mile to a mailbox. And she doesn't just talk on the phone-she walks and talks. "I'm not focusing on the walking, so time flies, and I've accomplished two things."

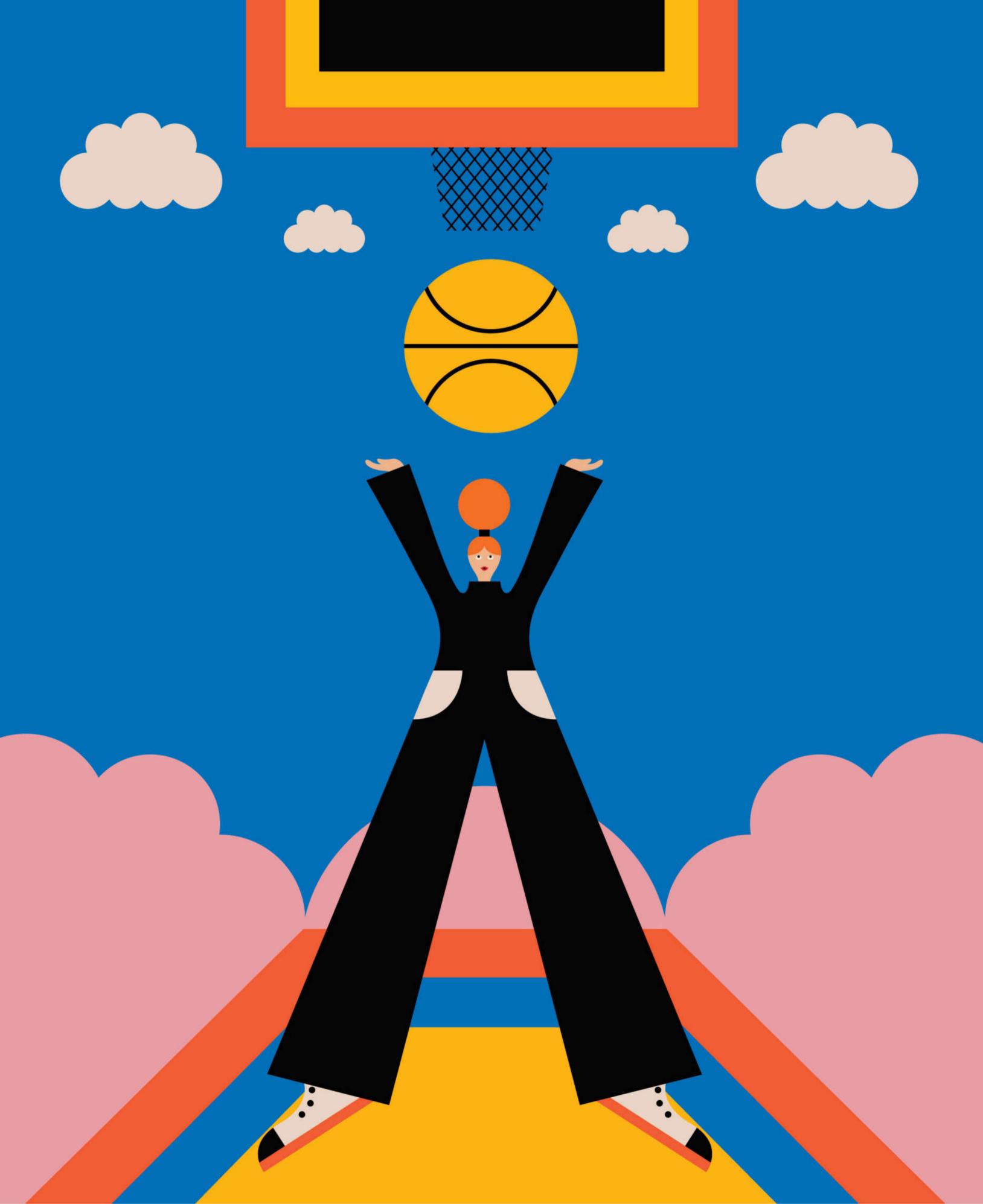
**Go the long way.** Bypass the nearest bathroom or water fountain in favor of one that's farther from you. "Take the longer route to give yourself more activity," Segar says.

Embrace active waiting. Instead of sitting in your car or on the sidelines as you wait for your kids to be done with an activity, get up and move. That's what Segar would do during her son's two-hour-long karate practices. Pacing the parking lot even for a few minutes is better than being inactive.

Leave your car behind. "I now walk to do errands I used to drive to do," says Joanne Dunsky, 57, of Medway, Massachusetts. "It just feels so good to be outside." Declare a moratorium on driving from one part of a parking lot to another-even if Ulta and World Market *are* on opposite ends of the strip mall.

**Just dance.** Whenever Susan Pollay (see "I Did It!," page 99) hears a rocking beat, she starts to groove no matter where she is. She's danced in city streets, at parades, even during halftimes at professional basketball games. "If there's music, I'm up on my feet dancing. I don't think of it as exercise. I'm just doing something I enjoy. It makes me happy."

**Snack on exercise.** Doing just five one-minute bouts of activity (with a one-minute rest between each) twice a day can improve muscle function, according to the Journal of Aging Research. Simple moves are enoughsit-to-stand from a chair, calf raises, marching in place—and can be done



# Liz made a TikTok dance video with her 16-year-old. "I found my inner, long-dormant cheerleader while practicing."

in the office, while traveling, or when waiting in line. Six one-minute bouts three times a day, performed before meals, improved blood sugar control in people at risk for diabetes, a New Zealand study found.



Susan had a lot of exercise rules. She had to go to the gym. It had to be hard. She had to keep at it for long periods. "I thought there was only one perfect way to do it, and I was failing at it." But after some virtual coaching sessions with Segar, she learned that the small stuff counts too. When she started parking her car farther from entrances and getting up every hour from her desk, she felt more productive, energetic, and creative at work. To stay motivated, she focuses on the positive side effects of her actions. "Nobody is going to ding my car. The car is going to be nice and cool," she says of parking in a faraway, shady spot. When she gets up from her desk, it's to drink a refreshing, cold glass of water, not because she has to exercise. "I'm transforming it into something pleasurable," she says.

#### WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Shoot hoops. Every time you miss, you get a letter, and the first one to spell "pig" or "horse" loses. If the game is over too quickly, pick a longer word, like "elephant." Frates played with her father when she was a kid and now plays with her 19-year-old

son. "I hadn't picked up a basketball in years, but it was so much fun," she says. "It made me feel connected to my past and also connected to my son and my future with him."

Make a TikTok. Learn and record a TikTok dance with (or without!) your kid. It's a great bonding experience, and you'll be on your feet moving. "I found my inner, long-dormant cheerleader while practicing the choreography," says Liz Vaccariello, editor in chief of *Real Simple*, whose 16-year-old daughter selected the routine.

#### Upgrade to virtual reality games.

Active gaming devices, like Oculus Quest, immerse you in the action. You'll swing a light saber to slash objects, or jump and squat to avoid being hit. Family and friends will be entertained watching your moves as they wait their turn to try to beat your score. For game ideas and to see how they stack up as workouts, check out vrhealth.institute/vr-ratings.

#### Make walking your appetizer.

Next time you go out to dinner, park a half mile or so away and stroll to the restaurant. The return trip may also help you better digest your meal.

**Shelve the board games.** Moses invested in a Ping-Pong table and dartboard so she and her family could

spend more time moving. They also play badminton outdoors, and indoors they box, dance, and bowl via their Xbox. "It's fun, and you're sweating when you're done," she says.

Hop to it. Engage in balance training by pretending to hop from rock to rock across a stream, suggests Mary Yoke, PhD, a faculty member in the kinesiology department at Indiana University—Purdue University Indiana University—Purdue University Indiana University—Purdue University Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis. You could draw a pattern on your driveway with chalk, or toss some balls, beanbags, or paper plates around your yard and jump from one to the other. For an added challenge, balance on one leg as you bend down to pick up each object. See who can leap the farthest or pick up the most objects before losing their balance.



#### CAROLYN TATUM MILLER, 48, SHERRILLS FORD, NORTH CAROLINA

To stay strong as she aged, Carolyn gave up the workouts that made her miserable, like kickboxing and weight training at the gym. She began streaming routines from Ellen Barrett, a fitness instructor and the creator of Mindful Movement (ellenbarrett.com). Barrett focuses on core-strengthening exercises, like planks, and functional moves, like squats, while cuing deep inhales and exhales. "I always felt better afterward," Carolyn says. "It made me feel like I was preparing to live a full, active life I could enjoy with my teenager." Her increased strength and confidence led to fun activities with her 18-year-old son, such as kayaking, hiking, stand-up paddleboarding, and even waterfall rappelling.





## from passion to profit

If you dream of being your own boss, of turning a hobby into a business, learn from five successful women who did just that.

By LISA ARBETTER

talk about GIRL power: More women are starting businesses than ever before. The number of female-founded companies climbed by 21 percent between 2014 and 2019, according to a report from American Express. That's more than double the growth rate of *all* businesses. Pretty cool, right? Barriers still abound, of course, but the numbers prove we can chip away at them. Let these women, who turned side gigs into full-fledged companies, inspire you to go after your big idea.



## trust your gut

ORA ASSAYAG, founder and CEO of Ora's Amazing Herbal

THE BACKSTORY: Everything you need to know about Ora Assayag's entrepreneurial success can be summed up by two phrases she uses to describe herself: "not a doctor person" and "a little bit belligerent."

Ora (pictured opposite) started considering alternatives to traditional medicine as a teenager, after being hospitalized for Crohn's disease. Still feeling awful, even after treatment, she began doing her own research. This led to a deep interest in the healing power of food, and eventually to degrees in biology and nutrition.

**THE IDEA:** In 2010, she was working on her first startup, a healthy-cookie company, when the youngest of her four children came down with a severe, scratch-untilshe-bled case of eczema. Preferring to try something natural for her 1-year-old's tender skin before going down the prescription medication road, she turned to some of the master herbalists and naturopaths she'd gone to school with. Under their direction, she mixed up an herbal salve of non-GMO grapeseed oil infused with seven anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and healing organic herbs. "Even *I* was amazed by how effective it was, truthfully," Ora says.

**THE LEAP:** She gifted the rest of the batch to friends and family, who used it for everything from dry cuticles to burns. When they started asking for more, she knew she was onto something. In 2012, Ora's Amazing Herbal was born.

# I want to empower people with self-care. It really goes a lot deeper than the product.

Touchy Skin Salve, as that first product came to be known, is still one of the top sellers in her line, which now includes about 40 items. The entirely self-funded company, with nine employees, is a family-run business. Ora researches and creates the products, then passes her recipes to her husband, Ronen, who produces them. "I really couldn't do it without him," she says, "but it's tough to work with your spouse. Sometimes I just need something done right now, and he's like, 'OK, but who's making dinner?'" Even her two boys, ages 18 and 16, and two girls, ages 14 and 11, help out sometimes.

Throughout the eight years of slow and steady growth, Ora has been motivated by the thank-you notes from people whose persistent rashes, problem skin, or sensitivities to chemicals seemed incurable. "I want to empower people with self-care," she says. "Taking a moment to be more conscious about what we use and how we use it, how it affects our community and our earth, influences how we treat others. It really goes a lot deeper than the product."

**THE TAKEAWAY:** Don't ignore what Ora calls your "inner knowing." Ora had to recognize that her passion was herbs and natural healing, rather than food and nutrition, which she had a degree in. That acknowledgment gave her the courage to start something new.





# if you want it, so do others

GRACE ELEYAE, cofounder and CEO of Grace Eleyae

**THE BACKSTORY:** Grace Eleyae's mom warned her: "Protect your hair." But Grace (pictured on page 100), who was vacationing in Kenya at the time, just wanted to look cute. Wearing a headscarf wasn't part of the plan.

Neither was a bald spot. But that's exactly what developed after the dry heat and friction from the car's headrest conspired to break off her chemically straightened hair. "It was a traumatic experience," she says. "It made me start thinking that there has to be something to protect your hair that you can also feel cute wearing when you're on vacation."

THE IDEA: When she returned home, the then 26-year-old began playing with the possibility of a satin-lined cap, while working at a start-up during the day and taking sewing classes at night. The satin, she knew, would protect the hair and retain moisture, much like a sleeping bonnet. The cotton exterior, made to look like a beanie, was the key to cuteness. What she couldn't figure out was how to keep the cap from sliding off the head.

The last project in her sewing class provided the answer. "We had to learn how to sew in an invisible elastic band," she says. "In a moment of divine inspiration, I realized that *that*'s the thing that'll help it stay on. So I went straight to my sewing machine and sewed the prototype."

Her mom, her sisters, and a couple of cousins raved when she showed them her rough sample. Buoyed by their encouragement and armed with their feedback, she went through about five iterations before landing on what would become her original satin-lined cap, or Slap.

THE LEAP: She started selling the hand-sewn creations on Etsy and continued doing so as a side project while attending journalism grad school at Northwestern. Even after her brother loaned her \$10,000 for an initial manufacturing run, she resisted focusing on the business full-time. Then, in 2015, two years after that fateful trip to Kenya, things took off. A year earlier, she and her sister had written to about 100 YouTubers with large followings to try to get some coverage. Three answered, and only one posted, but that one post provided momentum. "We grew 10 times year over year for the first three years," Grace says.

Today, celebrities such as Viola Davis, as well as many men, are customers. The line has expanded to include scrunchies, turbans, hats, headbands, and other satin- or silk-lined headwear. "I made the Slap for myself, thinking I was solving a problem for my own life," Grace says. "It is such a nice surprise knowing that so many people wanted this, that I actually filled a gap in the market."

**THE TAKEAWAY:** Put yourself in the mind of your customer. Grace created something new, and she understood that people would need to be educated about what it was. That's why, in the early days of online influencers, she turned to YouTubers and produced her own videos—so customers could see the product's benefits for themselves.

It is such a nice surprise knowing that so many people wanted this, that I actually filled a gap in the market.

## know when to ask for help

#### EMILY McDOWELL,

founder and creative director of Em & Friends



THE BACKSTORY: Emily McDowell (pictured right) was freelancing as an ad agency creative director when she stumbled upon a selfhelp article promising to answer the very question she was struggling with: "What should I do with my life?" It suggested that happiness could be found by revisiting what you loved doing as a child. "For me, it was writing and drawing," she says. "I had always loved lettering, and handlettering wasn't the giant trend it is now." She started drawing in her free time and eventually opened an Etsy shop, in 2011. She earned about \$40,000 her first year by selling prints of her artwork.

THE IDEA: Creating greeting cards that accurately reflected her relationships and the messiness of life had been in the back of Emily's mind since she was diagnosed with cancer at 24. "Get well" just seemed like the wrong sentiment to express to someone who might not recover. "One of my huge motivations is to help people convey things they wouldn't be able to find the words for on their own," she says. (Exhibit A: Her popular card that reads, "No card can make this better. But I'm giving you one anyway.")

THE LEAP: Her first card dealt with a profoundly awkward situation many of us are familiar with: what to say or do on Valentine's Day when you've just started dating someone. She found a local printer and had 50 cards made; she ended up selling 1,700 in one week. That was all the proof she needed that there was a market for these cards. So she took three months off, lived on savings, and created a collection of 40 cards, which she launched at the National Stationery Show in May 2013. Over the next four years, the company grew to employ 14 people. As CEO, Emily was still doing all the writing and artwork by herself. She was a success, but...

"I was miserable," she says. "Massive burnout. There was no joy. It felt like all hardship." So she merged with another femalefounded gift company, called Knock Knock. Jen Bilik, Knock Knock's founder, is CEO of the merged company, while Emily

focuses on creative direction and strategy. She is particularly proud of the collaboration they've done with the writer Elizabeth Gilbert.

While merging the two companies resulted in some unexpected growing pains, they made it through. Even with the coronavirus interruption, Emily says the company is in a good place. They've shifted their priority from growth to stability. "We're focused on making a life that works, that feels sustainable," she says. "We don't need to take over the world."

THE TAKEAWAY: Be willing to give up some control. Emily always thought she'd love managing a big staff, but when the pressure started building, she had to admit that it wasn't how she wanted to spend her time. Merging her company with Knock Knock put her life back into balance and let her focus on what she loves: writing and design.







## network like crazy

NICOLE GIBBONS, founder and CEO of Clare

THE BACKSTORY: Nicole Gibbons (pictured opposite) overachieves at overachieving. While working her way up from assistant to global director of public relations and events at Victoria's Secret, she spent five years meticulously building her blog and interior design business on the side, promoting herself by doing videos for brands. After she left Victoria's Secret, she was cast on *Home Made Simple*, a design show on the Oprah Winfrey Network, and stayed for three seasons. Throughout it all, Nicole, who has ambitions of becoming a Martha Stewarttype lifestyle brand, dreamed of launching a line of products. "I just didn't know what made sense," she says.

**THE IDEA:** As Nicole was helping a friend through the painful process of picking interior paint colors, it hit her. Someone needed to simplify choosing, sampling, and buying paint.

In 2018, she launched Clare, an online paint company that offers a curated selection of 61 colors (versus the thousands sold by other brands). The paint and all the tools are delivered to your door. "I thought if I could bring in designer-led expertise, that would help people choose a color and make the process more delightful," she says.

I have this ridiculous "I can do anything" mentality.

I don't care what I read on paper.
I'm going to do it anyway.

But founding a manufacturing company is not the same as founding a design business. You need serious start-up funding, which for Nicole meant wading into the male-dominated world of venture capital.

The portion of venture capital going to womenfounded businesses is laughable (2.7 percent, per the financial data company PitchBook), and it's even worse for Black women. According to the 2020 ProjectDiane report, Black and Latinx women founders have received just 0.64 percent of venture capital since 2018. "If you looked at it on paper, you would assume someone like me would never get funding," Nicole says. "But I have this ridiculous 'I can do anything' mentality. I don't care what I read on paper. I'm going to do it anyway."

**THE LEAP:** She took 2017 to prepare the living heck out of her pitch. "I spent a ton of time trying to understand manufacturing and figure out who all the suppliers were. Tons of phone calls, tons of meetings, tons of travel. And I did all this off savings," she says. Nicole eventually raised \$2 million and launched Clare seven months later.

**THE TAKEAWAY:** Reach out to everyone you know—and those you don't. Nicole credits the birth of Clare to two meetings: one with a paint chemist she found through Google, and the second with a venture capitalist who was offering 20-minute informational sessions to anyone who signed up. Both women gave actionable advice and encouragement that helped Nicole move forward.





## embrace your mistakes

NICOLE POMIJE, creator and owner of the Cookie Cups

THE BACKSTORY: The head of a marketing and PR firm in Minneapolis, Nicole Pomije (pictured below) was baking her stress away when a bit of kitchen improve produced her next business idea.



THE IDEA: She was making chocolate chip cookies but couldn't find a cookie sheet, so she grabbed a mini cupcake pan instead. She loved the resulting dense, moist "cookie cups" so much that she started experimenting with flavors and bringing them to family gatherings. "It kind of became my thing," she says.

Farmers markets were next. Over the course of two summers, she built up a loyal following, selling out every market day and catering for customers on the side. She made about \$15,000 per season—it was more a creative outlet than a real business. "I was just having a good time and enjoying what was going on," she says. "Opening a bakery—I never really saw that as an end goal."

she and her family moved to a new house in Wayzata, about 12 miles from Minneapolis. "Every day, we would drive past this empty space. And one day I said to my husband, 'Do you think that would maybe make a good spot for a bakery?'"

The rundown, 700-square-foot store was on a well-traveled road, and Nicole couldn't shake the feeling that it was perfect. She signed a lease and got to work fixing it up. "It was a ninemonth renovation, and I paid for it through selling cookie cups at farmers markets and using funds from my marketing firm—anything I could spare," she says. All in, it cost her about \$50,000.

As she was figuring out how to get licenses, trademarks, and updated plumbing, Nicole—who, I wish someone had told me how fulfilling it is to run a local bakery and serve your community, because it's priceless.

oh yeah, was also pregnant with her now 3-year-old daughter—was planning a menu. She wanted to include nondessert options, but paninis and soups didn't make sense to her. So she returned to her beloved cupcake pan and created savory selections, such as mac and cheese, tacos, pizza, and meatloaf with mashed potato "frosting."

Finally, on April 7, 2018, about six months later than she'd hoped, the Cookie Cups bakery opened for business. The line was out the door. "It was the best day ever," Nicole says. She has since opened a second, larger location and added cooking classes to her offerings, all while running her marketing firm from an office she built herself in the second bakery.

THE TAKEAWAY: Seek out positive reinforcement. "Before I started, every single person told me this would be hard and asked if I was sure I wanted to do this," she says. "But I wish someone had told me how fulfilling it is to run a local bakery and serve your community, because it's priceless. When people come in and they're happy, it's just like, 'Wow, I really built something here.'" ■

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# FOOD STYLING BY CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING BY PRISSY LEE

## FOOD





112 REAL SIMPLE

- 8 6-oz. bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
- 1 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. berbere (such as McCormick)
- 13/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
  - 2 Tbsp. olive oil
  - 1 large red onion, thinly sliced
  - 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
  - 1 lb. green beans, trimmed
  - 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth, divided
- 3/4 cup instant polenta
  Lime wedges, for serving

**PREHEAT** oven to 425°F. Season chicken with berbere and 1½ teaspoons salt; rub to coat.

skillet over medium-high. Place 4 chicken thighs, skin side down, in skillet; cook, undisturbed, until skin is crisp, about 5 minutes. Flip thighs and cook for 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Repeat with remaining chicken.

add onion and garlic to skillet; cook over medium, stirring often, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in beans, 1 cup broth, and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt; bring to a boil. Return chicken to skillet, skin side up. Transfer skillet to oven and bake until a thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165°F, about 15 minutes.

**MEANWHILE,** bring remaining 3 cups broth to a boil in a saucepan over high. Gradually whisk in polenta until smooth. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring constantly, until polenta thickens, about 5 minutes. Serve with chicken thighs, bean mixture, and lime wedges.

**PER SERVING:** 523 Calories, 17g Fat (4g Saturated), 192mg Cholesterol, 8g Fiber, 50g Protein, 36g Carbs, 1,117mg Sodium, 7g Sugar

Recipes by Anna Theoktisto Photographs by Greg DuPree





EASY DINNER 3

#### Speedy Linguine and Clam Sauce

ACTIVE TIME 15 MINUTES TOTAL TIME 20 MINUTES SERVES 4

✓ Quick Cooking

- 18-oz. bunch broccoli rabe, chopped into 11/2-in. pieces
- 1/4 cup olive oil, plus more for serving
- 6 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup (4 oz.) dry white wine
- 2 10-oz. cans clams, undrained
- 1 8-oz. bottle clam juice
- 1 cup loosely packed chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (from 1 bunch)
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt, plus more for water Grated pecorino Romano cheese, for serving

be al dente.) Drain, reserving 1/2 cup cooking water.

**MEANWHILE**, heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add garlic and crushed red pepper. Cook, stirring often, until garlic is golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Add wine; bring to a boil over medium-high. Boil until reduced by half, about 3 minutes. Stir in clams and clam juice; return to a boil. Boil until sauce has thickened slightly, about 5 minutes.

ADD parsley, salt, and pasta mixture to sauce; toss to coat. Add reserved cooking water as needed, tossing, until sauce is thin enough to evenly coat pasta. Top with grated cheese and a drizzle of oil.

PER SERVING: 642 Calories, 17g Fat (3g Saturated), 56mg Cholesterol, 4g Fiber, 39g Protein, 75g Carbs, 607mg Sodium, 4g Sugar

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#### EASY DINNER 4

## Carrot and

- 1 tsp. cumin seeds
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 11/2 lb. carrots, roughly chopped (about 4 cups)
  - 3 large shallots, thinly sliced
  - 1 1-in. piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated (2 tsp.)
  - 2 tsp. ground turmeric
  - 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup dried red lentils
- 11/2 cups well-shaken and stirred unsweetened coconut milk (from a 13.5-oz. can)
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper Chopped fresh cilantro leaves, for serving

TOAST cumin seeds in a large pot over medium-high, stirring often, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Remove from pot. Heat oil in pot. Add carrots and shallots; cook, stirring often, until shallots are very tender, about 6 minutes. Stir in ginger, turmeric, and toasted cumin. Cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in broth and lentils; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until carrots and lentils are tender, about 20 minutes.

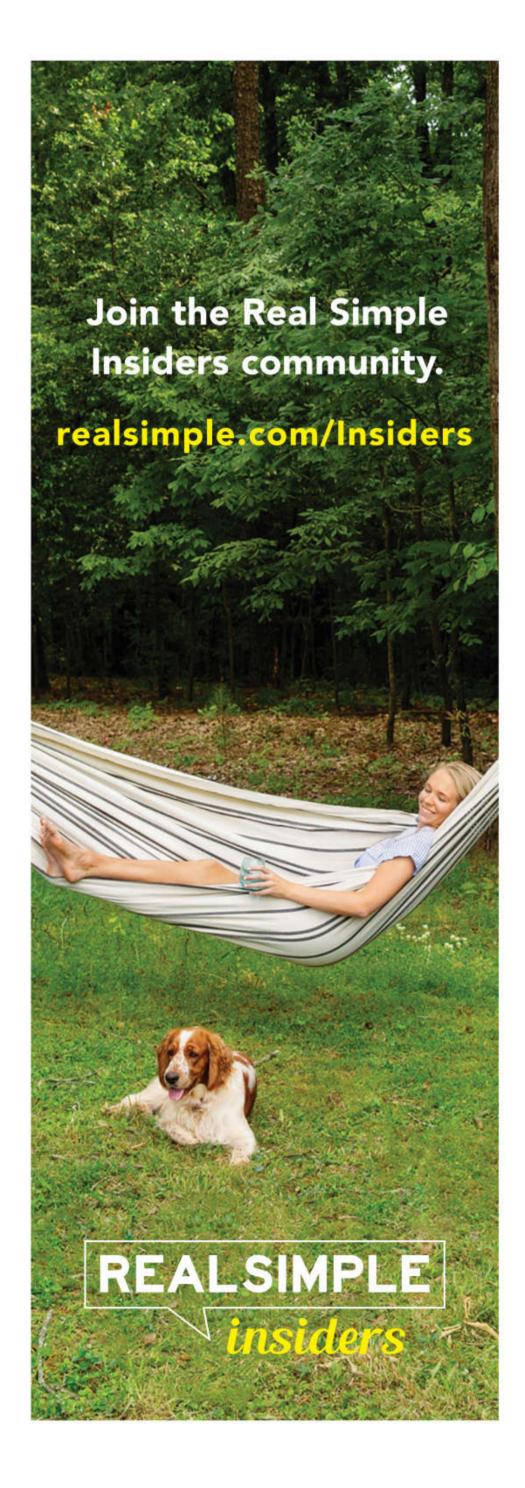
**BLEND** carrot mixture in a blender, in batches if necessary, taking care when blending hot liquids. (Or use an immersion blender directly in pot.) Return pureed soup to pot. Stir in coconut milk, 1 cup water, salt, and pepper. Top with cilantro.

PER SERVING: 442 Calories, 26g Fat (17g Saturated), Omg Cholesterol, 11g Fiber, 13g Protein, 44g Carbs, 984mg Sodium, 11g Sugar



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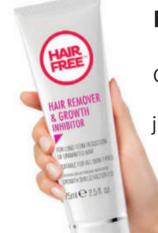


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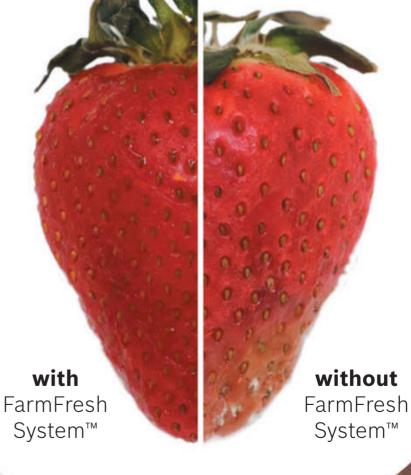
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